new masses

VOL. LXI, NO. 13 • DECEMBER 24, 1946 • 15¢; IN CANADA 20¢

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A LETTER TO HENRY WALLACE

DEAR MR. WALLACE: The other day, after the last paragraphs had been proofed and the magazine had gone to press, we sat around in that brief respite between issues and talked about our profession's past. We recalled the time when America bred great editors. There was a man named Peter Zenger, of New York; they could not quiet his democratic voice even though they threatened to put the torch to his printing establishment—and did. We invoked the memory of the Abolitionists like old Garrison who stubbornly insisted, amid the bitter cacophony of his day, "I will be heard."

Today, amid the engines' roar as they pile the stock of atom bombs, *you* will be heard. We congratulate the *New Republic* on its new editor and we feel cheered that our profession has won a new recruit (or rather, since you were once the country editor, that the Fourth Estate has regained an outstanding colleague). As you say in your current editorial, these are "days when reactionaries call the tune and the daily press dances to it." Hence, all publicists who value truth take heart that you have rejoined the ranks. America sorely needs men like you in the proud occupation of bringing light to the people and enlisting new millions in the good fight for "Jobs, Peace, Freedom," as your cover this week proclaims.

We stand with you in this objective. We know what you mean when you say the progressives are no small and beaten group. "They have just begun to fight." We endorse with all our heart your plea that "we must gather together progressives and fighters for peace from all parties, all regions and all groups."

Yes, the overriding compulsion is the unification of all these groups, regardless of their differing backgrounds, parties or religions, to combat the offensive of the warmakers, and those who would drive America down the economic road of bust and misery. We must seek to resolve differences in the camp of labor, the progressives, the liberals, through democratic discussion: differences must never be permitted to impede the quest for the widest areas of agreement on the strategy to win a peaceful, prosperous democratic America. It can, and it must, be done. We of NEW MASSES, for example, have our differences with you. We hold to the Marxist philosophy; we certainly differ with your estimate of Marxism, that it is "rigid dogma," that its aims do not embrace personal freedom. The goals of socialism, shared by many millions on all continents, enabled them to fight as the best patriots and the most self-sacrificing anti-fascists in the war against Hitler. The multitudes of Marxists who died on the battlefields in the Soviet Union, in France, in Yugoslavia, in Germany, took second place to none as lovers of their homelands and as enemies of everything that threatens democracy. And we American Marxists are proud of the record of the twelve thousand Communists in the armed forces who produced such men as Robert Thompson, winner of the Distinguished Service Cross in the Pacific fighting.

No, this is no hour to expand differences; we hear the advancing goosestep of a common enemy. We seek, rather, to extend the boundaries of agreement to embrace all segments of the people who abhor "the drive toward war" which is, as you eloquently say, "a drive against freedom." We recognize, as you do, down which road "lies fascism" and we stand ready to give everything, our days, our energies, our experience, our lives, to save America from being stampeded down that highway.

We know, as you so well say, that Roosevelt's ideals were not interred with his remains at Hyde Park. "For Roosevelt there were no endings, only beginnings." Yes, and as you write, a great new movement is already in the making, a movement which "will produce more great men." We stand with the millions who feel that you represent those men, and we rejoice that you shall carry on the good fight in the field of journalism.

Therefore, we salute you, Mr. Wallace. We wish you all good fortune in your new post and in your old fight—for jobs, for peace, for freedom.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph North

EDITOR.

new masses

established 1911

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Two weeks' notice is requested for change of address. Notification sent to NEW MASSES rather than the Post Office will give the best results. Vol. LXI, No. 13. Published weekly by THE NEW MASSES, INC., 104 E. 9th Street, New York 3, N. Y. Copyright 1946, THE NEW MASSES, INC. Reg. U. S. Patent Office. Washington Office, 802 F St. NW, Room 28. Drawings and text may not be reprinted without permission. Entered as second-class matter, June 23, 1926, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Single copies 15 cents. Subscriptions $6.00 a year in U. S. and Possessions and Mexico; six months $3.50; three months $2.00. Foreign, $7.00 a year; six months $4.00; three months, $2.25. In Canada $6.50 a year, $4.00 for six months, U. S. money; single copies in Canada 20 cents Canadian money. NEW MASSES welcomes the work of new writers and artists. Manuscripts and drawings must be accompanied by stamped, addressed envelope.

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ELEPHANT IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

Case-hardened Congressmen have "constructive" plans for organized labor

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Washington.

TALKING to Rep. Francis Case (R., S. D.) is an experience in word-hunting. Rep. Case, a neat, sparse, sandy-haired man of fifty, hunted for words. I hunted for words. But try as I might, I couldn't put my questions in a way that suited the Congressman.

Right from the outset we had trouble. My ears still were numb from the barrage I'd been hearing on the radio about how injunctions weren't enough; we had to have legislation to deal with the "crisis." Now the publicity-valuable brown-outs were over, the "crisis" was over, coal was being mined. So I asked him: "Now that the coal strike is over, and Lewis has sent the miners back to the mines, do you feel more friendly to labor so far as legislation goes?"

Rep. Case was silent. He looked at me. He fidgeted. As I figured it out later, he was word-hunting. "I don't care to answer a question which implies I am unfriendly to labor," he finally said, slowly.

From that time on, Rep. Case and I struggled to find, as it were, a common meeting ground in language. But it was hard going. Like when he said, in explaining whom he represented, "I think I'm in the same position as the innocent bystander in New York who thinks he isn't involved in a labor fracas but can't get the service he requires." This was his "whole interest." When I simply asked if this meant that he was representing the National Association of Manufacturers, he became apparently quite agitated.

He did not know what the NAM line was, he had not read its recent statement. "I do not even know any of the NAM people, more than having met a few of them casually."

Now Rep. Case, before he became nationally famous as the author of the House-passed Case Labor Disputes bill, initiating the anti-labor crusade which has been waged unremittingly ever since, was what he calls "a little country editor." (He had just sold his two newspapers when I interviewed him.) But even a Republican who used to be a newspaper man himself—and the Congress is full of them and they always tell you about their struggling days, from Sen. Arthur Vandenberg on down—may have some troubles with language these transition days. We see smoothies like Rep. Halleck calling for "constructive" legislation. ("Halleck is known as 'Charley Halleck'," Rep. Case himself writes in his latest newsletter to the folks back home, with what the journalism schools describe as the human interest touch.) But the ultra-reactionaries in the GOP are having difficulties concealing their labor-smashing designs by such polite adjectives as "constructive."

John L. Lewis' capitulation naturally has not changed the sentiments of the NAM. The anti-labor crew in Congress is just as avid to enact restrictive legislation as it was when the strike was on. Lewis' retreat has not only been a setback for labor, just as the mass strength of the CIO and AFL was beginning to be felt behind the strike with Philip Murray's call for unity in resisting the employers; it has

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allowed the spokesmen of the NAM in both parties to claim that the get-tough policy works. The President, fresh from his strike-breaking role, is going before the Congress to plead for tough labor legislation. And by anticipating, before Congress convenes, just about everything the GOP might do in the way of lifting controls, he has given the GOP a chance to pose as the "moderate party." He has given Lewis and other top AFL leaders an opportunity to sell the GOP to the workers in the 1948 elections as the more "liberal" party.

It was Mr. Truman's slave labor bill in the 79th Congress which gave Sen. Robert A. Taft the chance of a lifetime to sound off as a liberal in the Senate and hammer away about the violation of civil rights—the while he plugged for a worse bill which would treat every big strike as an insurrection.

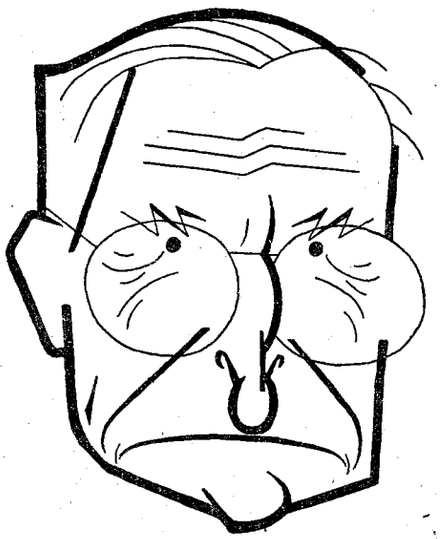
So now we see the GOP selling the new NAM line of attempting to be conciliatory and talking about the public interest. While the NAM is muzzling the extremely blunt members such as B. F. Hutchinson of Chrysler, the GOP is converting its brasher anti-labor spokesmen into the new 1947 streamlined Republican who is thinking of the vote in 1948. Despite the liberal window-dressing the pitch is given nevertheless by C. E. Wilson of General Motors, who called on Congress to end industry-wide bargaining. Wilson is echoing Sen. Ball, the former "liberal" (who now, like Sen. Taft, refuses to see a reporter from NEW MASSES because, as Mrs. Ball told me, "it is our experience the truth is not important to NEW MASSES").

Sen. Ball hardly waited for the votes to be counted before announcing that in addition to rewriting the Wagner Act the Republicans should conduct investigations into industry-wide collective bargaining, which he felt should be regulated. Even the "liberal" Harold E. Stassen, a contender for the presidential nomination in 1948, was quoted as saying "Republicans will develop a progressive program in the House and Senate. There will be no repeal of social legislation. However, I do recommend amending the Wagner Act to give the employers the same freedom of speech as employes now enjoy." And Sen. Taft, who once said, "I do not take much stock in take-home pay," now is considering whether he should take the Labor Committee chairmanship, meanwhile declaring he was not in favor of "punitive" legislation.

As REP. CASE talked, I could see how the new situation presents its problems for him and others like him.

"I want labor to get justice," he said earnestly, "without tying up production or defeating its aims." And he began telling me how work stoppages are "inflationary."

"You mean that your bill is not in



Middleman.

the interest of employers after all?" I asked.

Now there again, he said, I was asking a question "like the question about when you beat your wife last." And he set me clear. It was in the "general public's" interest.

"Would you say it is inimical to the interest of employers?" he was asked.

He strove for the exact word. Carefully, he said, "I do not accept the theory that the basic interests of employers and employes are antagonistic. There is basically a common welfare."

"Only you can't notice it much now," I said with a polite laugh.

The lines are only drawn "superficially," he corrected me. "With steady employment and full production" we would see that change.

"By the way, what will happen now to that Full Employment Act?" I asked. "Let's see, did you vote for that or not?" He could not recall whether there had been a record vote, or even what his position was. "I did not regard it as the crux of anything," he said. I agreed that by the time Congress got through with it it wasn't.

"Well," I said, "I don't seem able to put it in the right words, but what I want to get at is: in your mind is there a different situation now that Lewis has called off the strike?"

"No," he said, "I think the experience the country has had in the last few days if anything has intensified an awareness of the importance of legislation which would protect the country from being placed where any one man could hold the country in his grip."

But, he said, employing the new line, however self-consciously, "I don't approach the subject of legislation with bias." He was against "monopoly in either labor or industry" getting a stranglehold.

"Mr. Case," I then asked, "can you in all seriousness point out one instance where monopoly in industry has been cracked down on, as labor has been? What about the building industry? Didn't three veterans' groups charge the other day that the veterans' program has been scuttled, and come out in support of Wilson Wyatt (building expediter) just before his resignation?"

"The veterans in my state," he said, "adopted a resolution against channeling of materials." But he admitted that was the American Legion —and he did not deny that the American Legion originally supported the Wagner-Ellender-Taft housing bill before the real estate boards began exerting pressure.

He said that there were very few veterans in his state who could afford to buy a house. Asked if it weren't true that there were going to be fewer, now that Mr. Truman had removed ceilings from building materials, he said "many would rather rent than buy." When it was pointed out that the building spokesmen themselves admitted that they would not build apartment houses until they could make bigger profits—that is, until rent controls were lifted—he continued to defend them.

"May I ask one more question on this?" I said. "Do you think that prices of houses will go down when all controls are lifted?"

He went into an explanation then of how all that was needed was pro-

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duction. I repeated the question a couple of times. Finally he said, "Eventually."

"When would that be—in the ten years that it will take, according to government estimates, before the housing shortage is over with?"

But again, he did not accept my version. Plainly, we weren't getting very far. I tried again.

"Mr. Case," I began, "you are known largely as the author of the Labor Disputes bill."

I figured there could be no disagreement there. "As it so happens," he said, "I should be known equally as the author of the renegotiations statute. Yes," and he began producing hearings and documents and showing them to me and reading aloud from them, "here it is. I felt and said that nobody had the right to make excessive profits in wartime." I tried to interrupt to ask about present profits, but he went on. "I got abuse from the other side, too, just as I've been getting it from labor," he said shakily. "Here's a letter from Secretary of War Patterson. He knows where to give the credit for it." The Secretary cited savings of over $10,000,000,000 as of November 15.

"You see," he said, "and you can look it all up in the Record, in the spring of '42. I do try to be—well, I don't know whether to say 'objective.' It really isn't 'neutral,' because that implies a negative approach. But I do try to be fair."

I asked him if it were true that the Republicans might put forward spokesmen of a more middle-of-the-road reputation to sponsor labor legislation, rather than those, like himself, already known as authors of bills to crush labor.

"Now I wouldn't answer that," he said peevishly, "because I wouldn't admit my bill would crush labor." Rather, he said, it would provide "mediation machinery" and "mutual responsibility." Neither would be admit that others who were considering introducing bills were more "liberal" than he.

In the letter President Murray of the CIO wrote to Mr. Truman urging his veto of the Case bill he said that despite "fragments of window-dressing as a concession to even-handedness," the bill, like its predecessors, "is in fact exclusively and aggressively anti-labor . . . not one of these proposals will promote industrial peace. Not one of them will reduce strikes. . . . All . . . are merely servings from a warmed-over anti-labor stew which has been kept brewing for the past ten years."

Rep. Case's own newsletter reveals how deep-going his "impartiality" is. In citing what he would do in the coal strike "if the responsibility were mine," he mentions several steps, including setting up machinery such as he proposed in his bill. If these steps failed, his newsletter continued:

"I would ask Congress to assemble immediately to pass legislation authorizing the reopening of the mines under Army protection, with coal miners recruited at home, if possible, abroad if necessary."

THE Republicans now are concentrating on getting their own anti-labor legislation through both Houses by April 1, before the deadline set by Lewis. In the meantime the administration, whose only "triumphs" to date are "triumphs" over labor leaders—A. F. Whitney, representing 100,000 trainmen, and Lewis of the United Mine Workers—is further bringing disrepute on the Democratic Party. By the time the Conference of Progressives meets here January 24 it will be increasingly clear that the people of the country cannot safely put all their political eggs in either party basket. This does not mean that there is no chance of a progressive movement within the Democratic party around the Wallace-Pepper forces having an important influence on the nomination in 1948. It means, however, that even if such a movement develops, it will be strengthened by independent political activity outside of the party apparatus, which conceivably may lay the base for a third party.

Even in the last election it was illustrated in the three districts in the country where labor-backed Democrats won over reactionary Republican incumbents, that in no case did progressives depend only on the Democratic Party as such. In Colorado, for instance, where John Carroll displaced the ultra-reactionary Rep. Dean Gillespie in a hard-fought Denver contest, progressive political activity gained new stature by adopting a "leave nothing to chance" independence, while cooperating with the progressive elements of the Democratic Party.

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WHAT MARXISM OFFERS THE SCIENTIST

The philosophy which is a scientific path from physics and chemistry to economics and politics.

By DYSON CARTER

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM is the only scientific philosophy that explains science in general and can be used effectively as a theoretical guide in practical scientific research, as it is today in the Soviet Union. But when Communists approach professional scientists in our country they are often surprised, and sometimes placed at a serious disadvantage, on discovering that modern scientific workers as a rule despise all philosophy. Usually they ridicule philosophy as a plaything of impractical "arts" professors, a kind of amusing mental Yo-Yo game. The very suggestion that Marxism is founded upon a definite philosophy not infrequently repels scientists who otherwise are impressed by the intellectual, political and scientific achievements of Communists throughout the world.

This situation is easily explained. First, it is a natural result of the sterile philosophical teaching in our universities. There the official preachers of capitalism (Lenin called them "the scientific salesmen of theology") propound either frank philosophical idealism, which is irreconciliably opposed to and utterly refuted by science, or they water this indigestible mash and serve up to their young science students an agnostic compound of idealism and materialism. That is to say, they disguise idealism with the countless pseudo-modern trappings so thoroughly stripped away by Lenin in his famous study *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*.

One confusion, shamelessly encouraged by reactionary teachers, involves the basic terms used in philosophy. "Idealism" and "materialism" are technical terms, not related to the everyday use of the terms "ideals" and "crass materialism." On the contrary! The "idealist" in philosophy is nearly always a sworn enemy of all who are striving to realize the noblest ideals of humanity. And the most staunch "materialists" are found in freedom's camp, fighting the world's contemptible philistines, the monopolists and their henchmen, whose sole conception of material reality is the Dollar Sign.

Because idealism is anti-scientific, and because crude mechanistic materialism is unscientific, and further because dialectical materialism is ignored by bourgeois teachers of philosophy, the modern scientist develops an armor against philosophical principles in general.

But there is another reason for this attitude. When famous scientists turn to devising "new" philosophies supposedly in keeping with new trends in science, these doctrines invariably turn out to be nonsensical idealism. What the chemist Ostwald and the physicist Poincare did for an earlier generation, men like Jeans and Eddington have done in recent times. No honest scientist can read their philosophical confusions without deciding that a man of research had better stick to his laboratory, else he is in great danger of making a fool of himself.

Lenin warned of this danger forty years ago. At that time revolutionary advances in physics and chemistry had given reactionary philosophers a great new hope that science was about to refute materialism and give the human mind back to obscurantist churchmen for safekeeping. These idealists claimed triumphantly that discoveries relating to atomic structure proved once and for all that matter, reality, the world that exists independently of man, actually did not exist at all but was only a figment of mathematical physicists.

In the face of these accusations Lenin scored the greatest victories ever won in the history of philosophical debate. Despite the meager scientific facts at his disposal, due to the confusion then existing in research circles, the great Communist philosopher was able to prove that the new physics and new chemistry shattered nothing but the old, sterile, mechanical materialism. He proved that the new discoveries and new theories offered confirmation of the principles of dialectical materialism, and had in fact been foreseen by Frederick Engels in his *Dialectics of Nature*.

What is more, Lenin asserted that certain theories then being advanced by scientists would inevitably prove to be invalid. He indicated in what direction scientific theory would progress. Research since that time—right to the present moment—offers much evidence profoundly supporting Lenin's main contentions.

IT IS interesting to look at a few examples. For convenience let us start with some points raised by Prof. N. F. Mott, a well-known English physicist, who recently wrote a thinly-disguised attack on scientific philosophy in the Imperial Chemical Industries' journal *Endeavor* (July 1946). Prof. Mott first outlined the reasons why Newton's famous laws of motion, Newtonian mechanics, had to be abandoned as general, all-inclusive laws governing the motion of every body in the universe. Newton's laws turned out to be applicable only to bodies moving at "ordinary" speeds. Newtonian mechanics remain perfectly valid for all kinds of motion dealt with in engineering, from pile drivers to rifle bullets. But they cannot explain the motion of extremely small particles moving at high speeds.

For such bodies science developed "quantum mechanics." This theory, long since brilliantly confirmed by the whole of chemistry, and by much of "electronics" and spectroscopy, was in truth a confirmation of dialectical materialism. The interested physicist or mathematician can discover for himself what I have no space to outline here: the principle of the abrupt transformation of quantitative change into qualitative change, valid for all science, is

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exclusive to dialectical materialism and it anticipated the quantum theory.

About the same time Einstein's relativity principle shook the older mechanical materialism. Said Lenin: "Another cause of 'idealistic physics' is the principle of relativity . . . which in a period of bankruptcy of old theories . . . due to *ignorance of dialectics*, leads to idealism." That is to say, reactionaries by the score distorted Einstein and attempted to lead science to idealism through relativity. They hailed Einstein for having proved that "motion is not real."

Only an ignorance of dialectics could lead them to such a conclusion, for actually Einstein offered proof of the opposite dialectical materialist principle: *nothing but matter in motion is real.* What is more, Marxist philosophy exposed mechanistic physics long before Einstein. Still more, the whole question of relative and absolute scientific knowledge was solved by dialectical materialism many years before Einstein's special case threw the unscientific materialists into wild confusion.

HOWEVER, as Prof. Mott subtly points out, it was the famous "uncertainty" principle of Heisenberg which caused the greatest excitement of all. This theory, now an accepted part of quantum mechanics, proves that the position and velocity of a particle cannot both be measured at a single instant. The idealists raised a great hullaballoo over this. They claimed science had disproved the certainty of its own facts, that "matter wasn't really anywhere at any time," that nothing was certain and therefore the future of the world lay in the hands of God, etc., etc. All this would have been an extremely feeble joke if numerous scientists had not immediately fallen for the hoax.

Some of them, like Prof. Mott, can still say: "It seems therefore highly improbable that physics will ever revert to the position in which it could be believed that the future was inherent in the present." While Mott contrasts the uncertainty principle with purely mechanistic physics of the last century, he cannot see that his own confusion, the muddled thinking that infects our generation of scientists, was long ago dispelled by dialectical materialism. This philosophy was developed by Marx and Engels as *the* philosophy of science, and it stands four-square on the irrefutable fact that the practical everyday use we make of scientific knowledge proves it to be *certain*, though at any time our existing knowledge is relative, steadily advancing and expanding.

This particular controversy boils down to the typical ridiculous argument (for example) that medical science is "uncertain" because it cannot tell us exactly which individual patient will die of coronary thrombosis at precisely what time. Of course the theologians, who thus slyly cover up the scientific facts about absolute and relative knowledge, are only too anxious to have a heart specialist on duty when the bishop suffers a stroke—they have

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learned to depend on the electro-cardiograph's certainty.

However, our concern here is with those scientists who bow to such absurdities, in the belief that modern science is somehow bringing us closer to agnosticism or to a wobbly theological faith instead of to a mighty faith in man's conquest of nature. In Lenin's biting humor: "Recent physics fell into an idealist swamp mainly because the physicists did not know dialectics. They combated metaphysical materialism and its one-sided 'mechanization,' and by so doing they not only threw the water out of the bath, but the child as well."

Fascinating reading is found in Lenin's "The Revolution in Natural Science," a section of *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Also valuable is T. A. Jackson's modern study, *Dialectics*. Studying these texts in the light of recent developments in physics is a wonderfully refreshing experience for any scientist seeking faith in his work, in himself and humanity.

Two new examples from atomic physics are particularly enlightening. At the Princeton Bicentennial Conference on Nuclear Science in September, Dr. P. A. M. Dirac of Cambridge explained how his latest union of relativity with the uncertainty principle is leading forward the study of subnuclear forces and the immensely important phenomena of atomic disintegration in cosmic rays. Clearly, the man whose famous name was once closely associated with the idealist hue and cry against science has gone his stubborn scientific way and found "uncertainty" in the behavior of atomic particles to be so certain that it may soon give us clues to super-atomic power. Dr. J. A. Wheeler has trumped this with a wholly new mathematical perspective; very difficult to express in words, this theory implies the possibility of predicting the very "uncertainties" themselves.

Another striking theory was presented during the same month by Dr. E. P. Wigner, at an American Physical Society meeting. This Princeton scientist has postulated two new particles that move with the velocity of light but have no weight or mass. Such a formulation—and the weird interpretations being placed on it—is rooted in idealist confusion between mass and energy. It recalls the violent theoretical floundering that took place when the alpha, beta and gamma rays of radium were discovered. Said T. A. Jackson: "The whole future of science seemed to turn on the question whether they were 'rays' or 'particles' . . . nobody seemed to have been prepared for the fact that they were *both!*"

For the scientist who is skeptical that any philosophy can speak authoritatively on the problems of physics, reading Lenin on this question of "matter without mass" will prove illuminating. Discussing the nonsensical idea that modern physics made matter "disappear," Lenin forty years ago said, "this means that matter in the form of the limit which we have known up to now vanishes, as our knowledge penetrates deeper; those properties of matter which before seemed absolute, immutable and primary (impenetrability, inertia, mass, etc.) disappear, and now become relative, belonging only to certain states of matter."

When physicists were cowering before the attacks of the anti-science philosophers, Lenin even anticipated Wigner's 1946 discovery, in this historic passage: "The destructibility of the atom, its inexhaustibility, the mutability of all the forms of matter and the variability of its motion, have been the stronghold of dialectical materialism. . . . But this does not at all prove that nature, matter itself, is a symbol—a product of our reason. Human reason has discovered many amazing things in nature and will discover even more, thereby increasing its power over her."

And in this fashion he stressed the one property of matter which science cannot ever relinquish: "The property of being *objective reality*, of existing outside of our cognition. . . . Nature is infinite, but it *exists* infinitely; and only this categorical, unconditional recognition of its existence beyond the consciousness and sensation of man distinguishes dialectical materialism from relativist agnosticism and idealism."

An article of this kind cannot even attempt to clear up the philosophical misunderstandings of scientists brought up to separate rigidly their science from their ideas about the world. "Nature," said Engels, "is the test of dialectics, and it must be said that modern natural science has furnished extremely rich and daily increasing material for this test." However, dialectical materialism is the scientific philosophy that goes far beyond natural science. It explains all natural phenomena not statically but in their total development, movement, progression. And just as it lays bare the laws of motion of those forms of matter dealt with in physics, so it subjects to scientific analysis the laws of motion of human society.

In one unbroken and consistently scientific path Marxist philosophy extends from chemistry and physics to economics and politics. Herein lies the reason why dialectical materialism is hated by the "scientific salesmen" of capitalism, why they fearfully keep it from our scientists like a dread "closed book with seven seals."

With supreme confidence we can refer scientists to Marxist philosophy. Not because it is a dogma, but because it is an adventure in discovering truth. Marxist philosophy is the most stirring challenge that can be presented to the intellect, the challenge to free one's mind and spirit from the suffocating conflict of living, working and believing in separate worlds.

Mr. Carter is a well-known writer on scientific subjects. His most recently published book is "Sin and Science."

AUDUBON'S "WILD TURKEY COCK"

His spare hard frame, his spare strong shanks
Are just as strong and just as spare
As ever any rocking chair
Grandfather cut from maple planks
To seat our young grandmother on.

His scaly head erect and furred;
His red male combs all swollen full;
His colors all November dull;
Audubon paints the mighty bird
Columbus raised the curtain on.

RALPH KNIGHT.

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LOOK HOMEWARD, ERNIE

Above the Tory plaudits ringing in their ears, Bevin and Attlee can hear the rumblings of Labor rebellion against their foreign policy.

By DEREK KARTUN

Mr. Kartun, who has been covering the international conferences in New York, is the foreign editor of the London "Daily Worker."

IT IS often said in England that should Ernest Bevin ever have to explain to the English people the exact position into which his "America first and always" policy has led him, he would find himself in much the same situation as the man in the ballad about the pantomime, who sang:

Don't tell my mother I'm half of a horse in a panto;
Never let her know that I'm a sham.
But should she once discover
I'm half of a horse in a panto,
Don't tell her which half I am.

While Mr. Bevin has been using the excuse that he had to have private talks with Byrnes about Palestine to pursue a most intimate alliance with the Secretary of State at the Waldorf Astoria, behind the backs of the French and the Russians, and while Sir Hartley Shawcross in the Political and Security Committee at Lake Success has been muttering and mumbling in audible whispers with Senator Connally in order to guarantee a one hundred percent united Anglo-American front, back home in Britain they are beginning to tell Mother something about which end of a horse is Byrnes and which is Bevin. And it is dawning at last on a good number of Labor Party members that whatever he may say to the contrary, Ernest Bevin is definitely not the end that bites. For over a year he has carried out a devastating policy throughout Europe and the Middle East with the constant excuse that he had to do it in order to avoid antagonizing US opinion and to safeguard the Loan. And now Bevin, after eighteen months of buttering up American opinion, is heartily booed at a football game in New York. He was booed for Palestine, for Greece and for Spain. If he learned anything at all that afternoon a fortnight ago it surely was that all his efforts to tie Britain to Wall Street had not impressed Americans very noticeably. And he already knows that it will take a good deal more than he, as a Labor Foreign Secretary, can do to please Senator Taft and his friends in Washington.

But as if all this were not enough for Bevin, there have been developments back home in the last month that are the most serious yet for the Churchillian policy now being pursued by the Labor government, and certainly the most hopeful and encouraging for the large and growing body of British opinion which believes that the issue of war or peace hinges to a serious extent upon forcing a change in that policy. What happened was that in a confidence vote on the government's foreign policy, after a debate in which the big guns were brought to bear and threats were liberally hurled at the heads of everyone concerned, no less than 150 Labor members abstained from voting and signified thereby their hostility to Bevin.

To understand how this happened and to place it in fair perspective it is necessary to go back a little way to the last Trade Union Congress at Brighton in October. There the delegates, representing the organized workers of Britain, voted down the government's Spanish policy overwhelmingly. They demonstrated their intention of doing the same with the policy on Greece; and a massive two and a half million minority vote was piled up behind a resolution from the Electrical Trades Union condemning the whole foreign policy of the government. Prime Minister Attlee himself had been sent down to Brighton before the latter debate, and spent a third of his speech lunging clumsily at the Communists. He accused the electricians of being dominated by the Reds, and condemned their resolution before it had come up for discussion.

Attlee's characterization of the elec-

Ernest Bevin.

Middleman.

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Attlee.

tricians did not greatly impress the delegates, since everyone present knew that it was the purest imagination. But what was perfectly true was that this expression of hostility to Bevin's policy had become possible thanks in largest measure to months of pioneering work by progressives and Communists, in the course of which a complete, beautifully documented day by day exposure of just what Bevin was doing in Europe and elsewhere had been presented to the whole Labor movement. This, then, was the first break in the solid front of support Bevin thought he had built up for himself by constantly protesting: "I am the one with a socialist policy. It's the Russians and their satellites who are the imperialists."

WHAT had happened at Brighton undoubtedly gave courage to a number of Labor MPs who for many months had been growing increasingly worried at what the Foreign Office was doing, but had not had the courage to associate themselves with the Left critics grouped around K. Zilliacus, a Labor MP with broad international experience. Backed by that vote on the Electricians' resolution, a number of Labor members, led by Richard Crossman (an assistant editor of the *New Statesman and Nation*), Barbara Ayrton Gould (of the Labor Party's executive) and a number of Parliamentary Under-Secretaries, addressed a long letter to Attlee listing their objections to Bevin's policy. It was a formidable indictment of British support for fascism in Greece and Spain, and it also made in telling fashion the point that Bevin was leading Labor Britain deep into the Wall Street jungle. The conclusion of these people was that Bevin was pursuing, not the policy on which Labor had been voted into power, but the old Tory policy of Churchill.

The Crossman group was immediately joined by Zilliacus and his friends, and then the usual process of threats, pressuring, buying off and hedging was begun by Attlee and the Laborite leader of the House, Herbert Morrison. All this while Ernest Bevin in New York was digging in his heels on disarmament, on Spain, on the Trieste settlement and on the Danube. All this while British policy ripped ahead in Palestine and the intrigues continued on the Iranian border.

But though the Labor Party leadership managed to avoid an open opposition vote from their own ranks they were unable to prevent the abstention vote. And once again the British public was treated to the spectacle of the old Munich gang on the Tory benches heaping praise upon Bevin and his works while the best members of his own party upbraided him bitterly for his actions in almost every part of the globe. Attlee and Morrison filed into the division lobby side by side with the Tories as the Labor rebels sat grimly in their seats. The first open challenge had come, and right away the British delegation in New York went to work to explain to anyone who was prepared to listen just how unimportant it all was. But it was by no means unimportant. It was the first sign that Bevin can no longer get by on the myth that because he has been a trade union leader in the past he is therefore a progressive foreign secretary now. He can no longer persuade even confirmed Social-Democrats like Crossman and his friends that support for fascists in Europe and close ties with Republicans in America are the best ways to promote the growth and well-being of labor at home. He can no longer persuade the trade unionists of the country that it is ethical or even expedient to support the Greek royalists in their efforts to exterminate the unions in that country. What Ernest Bevin is rapidly doing is arousing the indignation of the honest Labor people who want to support working people like themselves abroad; and at the same time he is antagonizing the intellectuals of his party who don't like the Communists in Europe, but do not believe they can be fought with the weapons Churchill was using unsuccessfully back in 1920.

Crossman made it clear that he

Churchill.

wanted the Churchillian policy replaced by a Social-Democratic foreign policy. He wanted this because in this way he considered the influence of Communism in Europe could be counteracted. What the revolt means then, if it means anything at all, is that Bevin is not only failing to please those who genuinely desire left-wing cooperation and friendship with the Soviet Union and the new democracies; he is also failing to please the leading exponents of Social-Democracy in his own party. If this trend—which is only a start, though an auspicious one—continues, he and his colleagues in the government will find themselves pleasing only the Tories. Which is sad reward for a policy which was intended to placate America, preserve Europe from "Bolshevism," keep Palestine and India safe for Britain and necessarily keep the Labor movement quiet at home.

It should not be imagined that Bevin and the Attlee cabinet will easily be shifted from their chosen course. They represent a long tradition of right-wing leadership within the British Labor Party; they have great prestige there; Bevin is powerful and has many friends; and a good deal more explanation will be required to bring to the British people generally a realization of exactly what is going on at the Foreign Office. But the revolt indicates that this desperately urgent process has started, and it is certain that Bevin in London will have to face a restless and dissatisfied Labor group in the House of Commons. Sir Hartley Shawcross' disgraceful performance on Spain at Lake Success, and the exposure of the secret arms deal with the U.S., will not have helped him to ride the approaching storm.

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MY FATHER WAS A MINISTER

"Property is sacred," he told his sons. But they hated the deacon and the other rich ones who humiliated and made a beggar of him.

From a novel by GEORGE ABBE

MY FATHER was a minister, poor, rotten poor. His shoes were always cracked and slicked over with blacking, and his eyes were hurt and wondering. He had a kindly face in which love and desire to do good burned daily like a clean march of wind, like a going forth of hope in a child's life. His face had a cleansed, penitent look.

Cold days in New Hampshire, ache of snow, the still awful budding, flake by flake, of snowstorm. The parsonage, wretched drafty. My father, bent at his desk, the thick blue hands laid fervently but futilely on his papers, his eyes sad. My father, rocking ceaselessly in his rocker, with his writing board across the arm of the chair, frowning, tugging at the guts of his mind for a sermon; the suffering, tired eyes. My father, getting up and looking to the celestial-pearled, heaven-sending range of mountains flung gold and blue and powerful to the south, above the southwest valley. Never a word, just a look of anguish. Hartford, Connecticut, lay in that direction. Hartford! His rich childhood home, the big churches and famous people there—William Lyon Phelps, Mark Twain — the sloping lawns of his boyhood home, the big porches, the cool, high rooms, the bookcases of expensive bindings, the servants—and now this!

"WRAP yourself well against the cold! Pull that muffler tighter!"

My mother stood before the kitchen stove. Midwinter, and a drumbeat of wind thudding the thin wall of the house. Her strained and beautiful face hovered over me.

Nine years old, I stood and stared. Her love reached out at me. But sometimes I hated her and my father; they stood for worry, impatience, fear—fear of hunger and homelessness, fear of the neighbors — perpetual, racking fear. "Don't say that, David. I'll lose my church. . . . Don't do that, David." Their authority was bleak and downroaring; and yet they spelled security and warmth. I looked at my mother's feet. Our furnace always worked badly—could never heat the rooms farthest from the front hall, where the register was. Now, in this kitchen, only the roaring wood stove as usual—drafts of air from the cracked, mean walls; on the floor next to the stove, water that had spilled lay frozen. My mother was wearing her overshoes, as she often did. It was thirty degrees in that kitchen close to the floor, even with the fire in full cry—twenty-five degrees, twenty degrees—in the early morning.

My mother had frequent colds, fever, weakness.

I pulled the muffler tighter and went out.

When I was in the snow, the budding, brushing flowering of the flakes, I owned something. I was empowered with the flakes I tasted on my tongue. The gold fish-bowl of the sky swimming with the myriad flakes was *my* bowl. I reached in a long arm from my mind and heart, and stirred. The peculiar, shifting violet light, like loose water, slimping in the great drifting fall of flakes was a color in *me*; it was *mine*. It tingled in my fingers, beat behind my eyes. I stood in the snow and laughed; I was lord of snow and downswimming white-violet sky. I *had* in me the distant hills muffled and blurred; I had in me the great solitary trees standing up and taking the snow on their limbs like holy up-curved vessels on an altar. I possessed things. And I was rife with joy.

Then I turned and looked at the long, low house. The cold that wrapped it was visible, a hail of silver nails that drove wounds in the crouching house. The house split open. I saw my mother standing in the freezing kitchen, trying to cook, to still the trembling of her body. Her overshoes were enormous, rising up now around her knees, like poisonous toadstools. I saw my father at his desk. His head was bare and windswept and the cold was driving its silver nails into his bare shoulders; and the eagle of the wind was perched on him, flapping.

MY FATHER came out into the snow. He carried two scuttles of coal ashes, from the Franklin stove that tried to warm his study, and from the derelict furnace. Bent over, his white face aslant to the wind, he fought his way to the ash pile in the lee of the barn. There he knelt and began to sift ashes. Laboriously, he sifted, and picked out, one by one, with his gloved hands (and how cheap the gloves—they wore through at once) the pieces of good coal as though they were precious stones—and put them into a scuttle.

This was his daily routine. I was young, but I saw, and something lacerated me. I went over to him.

"Dad, you'll be cold."

He looked up, numbed and wondering.

"David" — in his quiet, resigned voice — "keep your muffler tight. You know what your mother said."

I ran off into the drifts, but not happy now, not whirling in eons of elation and possession. I stopped, turned, saw my father's back, the cheap, ragged gloves, the slow, numbed picking of coal. I looked at the parsonage.

We don't *own* that house, my young mind cried. *They* own it. The Deacon, the church, the rich ones, the summer people who have the big houses by the lake and give money to the church. *They* own it. And I can't mar the walls, and I can't hurt the floors. And I can't yell at the Deacon and I can't say what I want to the boys and I can't slide and ski and go with the other boys. *Something owns us.*

And something rose in me, shaking me. I shouted, driving my fist into the falling snow: "Oh, you house, you house! Oh, you Deacon!—I'll get all of you in a corner and shoot you, the way the men at Bunker Hill shot the British. I'll watch your blood run out!"

I didn't know then. I didn't really

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know what it was. But I saw what it did. And I hated, and swore vengeance.

My father went back toward the house, one scuttle clucking contentedly with the saved coal, the other scuttle swinging limp. He walked slowly. The falling flakes made an aura about his head. His face was always a saintly face. When he came to the south side of the house, he paused. Across the street, in a neat, always newly-painted, always immaculate house, lived a well-to-do churchgoer, Mr. Fenley. The house had a tile roof. The house had a curving, comfortable front porch, a balcony above, little slits of windows above that under the eaves—like eyes. A portly Dutch burgomaster, smoking his pipe—porch, rotund belly; balcony, white cravat; windows, slitted, lazy eyes—and the broad, smug chimney, the indolent, insolent pipe. . . .

My father often stared at the Deacon's house from his study. It reminded him of his father's fine house in Hartford. It made him homesick for youth. And on the cupola of Mr. Fenley's barn was a weathervane—a running bronze horse. Usually, it was running toward the southwest, where Hartford lay. That was why my father liked the bronze horse: it seemed to be taking him home.

Now, in the storm, the weathervane faced northeast. A long storm . . . a long storm, it meant.

As he stood there, looking up at the vane, my father's face looked haunted, inexpressibly weary. As I watched him, the wind came up and blew about him fiercely, slapped his long black threadbare ministerial coat, slapped the sackcloth pants my mother mended with patience and love. The ash powder in his scuttle was whipped up, blew about him. It became a storm. It hid him, wiped him out. His long, lean, patient legs vanished, and his bony head with the black visored cap. The ash dust whirlpooled, and faded, and when it stopped, my father was not there.

Terrible, somersaulting fear in me. I ran toward the house we did not own. I ran, but it was miles to the house, across rivers of British blood and great plains of ash dust and the skulls of churchgoers ground to the fine powder of blowing snow. But the door of the kitchen was there—a bar of warmth struck firm across me as I broke into it, and slammed the door behind.

My mother. She was there. She turned. Her smile was secure and serene, and it became a live coal, quivering with flame, that moved across the space between us and touched my fear and healed and sealed it.

"Dad . . . ?" I said.

"In the cellar."

I ran down the stairs. He was kneeling in the bitter cold, by the furnace. Ashes lay on the floor. He was in a sort of crouch, with a piece of grate in his hand. His face was broken with despair and his hand was over his eyes.

"The grate's snapped," he said. "It's cold enough already."

He looked up and saw it was me. His head came up, slowly. The stricken, floundering eyes tried to steady.

"David, you can help. Get Mr. Fenley."

I stood still, breathing. His face, with the courage pushing cold and des-

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perate from it, was not cold now, but aglow. He rose to his feet. The love I felt coming down from his eyes into mine when he told me stories at bedtime, leaped and beaconed now. The cellar radiated a light; and the reeking cold quivered, crackled back under it, like sheet tin under a hammer. I saw that the dead ashes on the floor were shimmering with brightness. The cellar walls shone.

MR. FENLEY was church treasurer. My father must fawn and crawl.

"Mr. Fenley, I'm really sorry. The grate broke."

Mr. Fenley — red, smooth-glazed face that cracked apart under his smiles; hair flattened down. Always overfed.

"We'll fix it up."

Mr. Fenley patted me. He always patted me, when he wanted to appear friendly. I stood stiff. He had all the furniture and food we didn't have. He owned the orchards across the street, and we couldn't ski there.

Mr. Fenley smiled now. I would never forget it—the brutality of the condescension.

"I understand, Mr. Mason. I'll do all I can."

"I'd appreciate it, Mr. Fenley." A brightening of the sad face. "You're kind to us."

My mother came in.

"Mr. Fenley, this house is so cold. Couldn't we have a new furnace? Lanie has a cold. . . . And David isn't well."

She was angry. For once she forgot her subservience. The round, fresh face lifted and stung. Her children were *hers*, she owned them. . . . There were lines tied from her to them, wherever they were, and whatever they did —they tugged at her — what they were, *was* her. When they grew up, they would pay her back and take her in and feed her. She would own their lives and interests to the end. If they should sicken and die. . . . ! She had no house, no permanent home like many —no security. Her children were the only lasting property she had. They could not die!

Mr. Fenley was bland. "We'll do what we can."

"Do something, Mr. Fenley. It's so cold." Her usual diplomacy returned. "I'll get you some hot chocolate."

Flexible, well-formed, she hurried into the kitchen. She was always too tense and hurried.

"Mr. Fenley . . . the church is so far behind." My father's salary was seven hundred a year. They'd promised more, at the start. Instead, each year they beat him down—from a thousand to nine hundred, from nine hundred to eight—to seven hundred and fifty—to seven hundred. And their payments were always behind. "I hate to ask, but you know—clothes . . . food . . ."

My father's face was troubled. His spirit was pure and lofty, and he had faith and hope. But he could not understand. Jesus Christ was good: He had helped the poor. The church was supposed to stand for that. The ministry, he had once thought, had dignity. A servant of Christ! But the church did not give him dignity. Every day it humiliated him. It broke his spirit and flayed him; and he must beg for his pennies over and over.

"The church is poor," said Mr. Fenley. "We make every effort."

The hot chocolate was brought. He sipped it.

From where I sat I could see his face, flaccid and coyote-like, revolve on a long pin. The painted eyes on the stretched rubber of his expression, the calculating hatred and power. He had everything—a new car, polished floors, huge rugs. For years I had watched him strut across his lawns, puffing his pipe. He drove me and my brother Curt from his land. We broke his windows on Hallowe'en to pay back. At the least provocation, he spat and snapped at us.

"What are you doing these days, David?" He smiled at me, and I pulsed with loathing, suppressed growing joy.

I watched his face swell like a balloon before me, the nasty mouth and secret, bestial eyes. I knew his spirit. I had contact with it my parents did not have. Now the face revolved on a pin, and I held the pin. I hated him. And now, for a moment I had him in my possession.

"None of your business," I said.

My father stared, my mother sprang up.

"David! What are you saying?"

"Nothing," I said.

I watched Mr. Fenley's face, and thunder of growing joy and rebellion wrapped me. I held the pin and now the painted balloon of his face revolved, sneered. It swelled, and as he looked at me, his own hate stretched across the rubber. I laughed, and pricked the balloon. His face flashed up, boomed, and scattered down in bits of rubber. I got up, and nothing mattered.

When my father took me to my room, I felt superior.

"Don't *ever* talk that way to anyone. What's the matter with you? That's Mr. Fenley."

"I know it."

"I could lose my job. We could be without a home. Don't you see?"

How piteous and trembling the anguish of appeal in his eyes. He did not punish me; the punishment was his, cruelly his, and I could not fully see, then. I rejoiced, mocked him in my heart. He looked so helpless.

"I don't like him," I said, and I stared, smiling, into my father's face.

WHEN I stole a piece of board one night from the shed in back of Mr. Fenley's and got down on the floor at home with Curt, my older brother, and began to whittle a toy wheelbarrow, Curt said, "That's a new board; where'd you get that?"

"Fenley's!" I said, triumphantly.

My father, who had seemed absorbed in his sermon, rocking forlornly and gently in his rocker, his sermon board across the arms of the chair in front of him and the papers scattered along it and his eyes closed—my father looked up. He put his sermon aside, and came over to us. I had never seen him look so angry.

"Did you take that—without asking? A son of mine?" He couldn't bring himself to say "steal."

I felt raw and empty, with a gust of panic blowing through me. I stayed on the floor and looked up at him. It was always cold next to the floor—central heating registered only, with a bad furnace—hot around the head,

NEXT WEEK IN NM

If you miss next week's issue you will miss an article that ought to be of exceptional interest to thinking Americans. It is a piece on existentialism, the new philosophic trend that has appeared in France and is associated with the name of Jean-Paul Sartre, whose play, "No Exit," is now on Broadway. The article, which is the first Marxist analysis of existentialism to be published in this country, is by Louis Harap. Mr. Harap is now completing a book on the Marxist approach to the arts, which will be issued by International Publishers.

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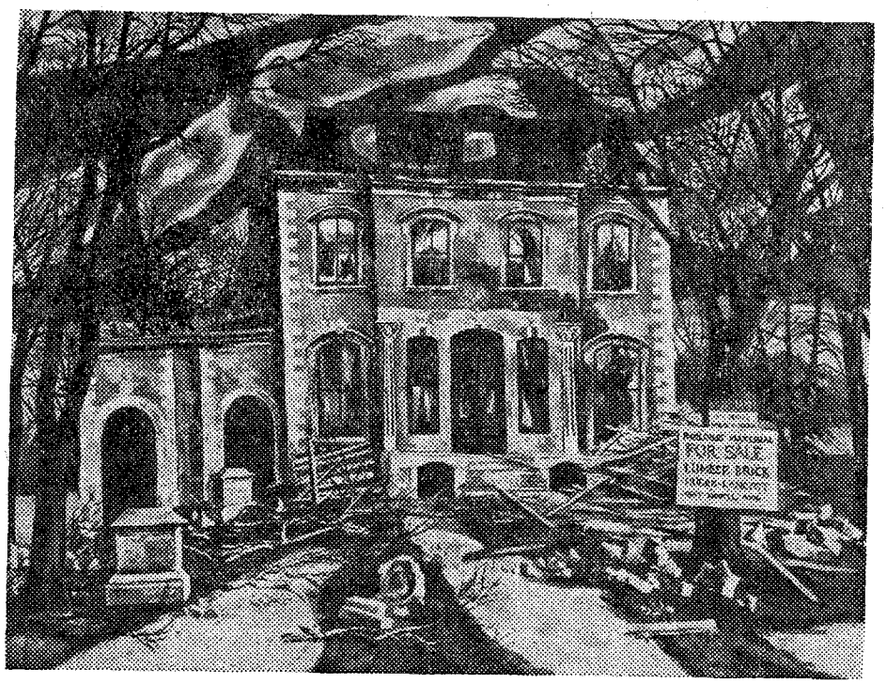

"The Last of the Mansion," oil by Virginia Cuthbert. From the Third Annual Pepsi-cola Art Competition.

dead cold on the legs—I crouched there, the air circling in icily from the flimsy walls (there were places, I recall, where the wallpaper in the kitchen stirred in a high wind). I could feel my brother's fear, and mine, sliding in the frigid trough of silence.

"Get up," said my father.

I got up. His worn, purified face became hammered for once.

"Property is sacred," he said, and caught my arm as he said it.

My mother came hurrying in.

"Gil," she said, "leave the boy alone! I'll manage it!"

My own dear, her inner mind was thinking, my promise of rest and comfort and security in later years—my children must be happy and safe.

She lectured me and let me go.

UP IN his low room under the eaves, my brother Curt went along the walls, slashing with his jack-knife at the wallpaper. My mother walked behind him, like a shadow.

"Don't, Curt. Don't."

"I'm going to," he said. "You have chilblains all the time. You have to keep me under a benzoine tent and steam me night after night and sit up till you're dead, and Lanie hasn't got any new clothes to go to a party and you have to make old ones over for her, and we have to depend on Aunt Cora for the boxes of old clothes she sends that you have to make over. What right have they got? They tell us we don't own this house. Why not? Doesn't Dad work as hard as any of them—walking their damn roads day after day—sitting in their stinking sickrooms?"

Curt was seventeen at the time. He was beginning to understand things.

"There's something wrong," he said.

He began to cut into the plaster behind the paper, and it crumbled and fell like snow around his feet.

"Don't, Curt." She trailed him like a shadow, but did not touch him. "We have to do the Lord's work wherever he puts us, and we must be humble. This isn't our property. We can't hurt it. They may send us away. We may lose the only home we have."

"This is only a beginning," Curt said, slashing at the wall. And now he began to break the beams behind the plaster. "I haven't been able to do anything since I was a kid in the parsonages we've lived in. I'm going to now."

"Oh, Curt! I *thought you loved* me."

"I do, Mom."

"Then stop."

"This is the only way I have to get back at them, Mom. Think of all they've done to you and Dad. But if I run into the street and strike Mr. Lambert and Mr. Fenley with the spiked club Dave and I made, Dad will lose his job. This way, it's safe. They won't see this for a long time."

"They aren't the only ones to blame for our being poor, Curt." She trailed him, faintly, elusively, like perfume. But he did not turn. "I had money, you know, at one time. Nine thousand dollars. I entrusted it to your father. He was so eager to increase it, so we could be independent, secure for the rest of our lives. He kept dreaming of his home in Hartford, and wanted life like that — respectable. He was so sweet and good and innocent."

Her lovely voice drifted like a wreath, red-berried, in the room, on the grave of all hopelessness.

"Yes, I loved your father deeply, and his father was a banker in Hartford, so I felt sure he knew about investments. A man came and urged him to buy some copper mine stock. He went to the New York office. While he sat there, talking with the officials, trying to feel confident before he invested, telegrams were brought in, telling of the growing production of the mine. The telegrams were a hoax. But your father, not suspecting, invested—the whole nine thousand. The whole thing was a trap."

A silence lay in the room, heavy, cold. Curt stopped his angry blows. He turned.

"That's one thing that has embittered him," said the mother. "Made him sad and given him those tired, weak spells."

"Yes," said Curt harshly; "and the time he couldn't get a church and sold brushes from door to door, and was cheated out of some of the little he really made." His face, sharp and sensitive, stormed into the room's low space with anger. "Humiliation! Talk about Stephen—and the martyrs! And this is the church! This is supposed to be Jesus Christ!"

Such mockery and fury caught his look that my mother withered and the fragrance went. Curt dropped his glance and looked down, exhausted, at his hands.

I had watched from the door, and now as he walked past me, I saw the walls of the room, sheer and whole again, looming like an enormous mountain, up surfaces my brother had just ripped open with the strength of his love.

This is a chapter from Mr. Abbe's unpublished novel, "Possession," the first of a trilogy.

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STARCHED COLLARS AND WILTING DOLLARS

An Editorial by A. B. MAGIL

THERE'S starch in a good many white-collar workers these days. They are battling for the right to eat and for that human dignity which is supposed to be inherent in their status, but rarely is. No worker likes to go out on strike: it means suffering for himself and his family, not to mention abuse from the press and radio. How much more difficult it is for the white-collar person, who has been nurtured in the belief that he is set apart from the ordinary working man, that he really belongs to the middle class with all its illusions of superiority and independence. Yet today teachers are discovering that it is sometimes necessary to give very pointed outdoor lessons to retarded city and state administrations, and newspapermen are finding that picket-lines often give their incomes more of a lift than bylines.

As I write, the American Newspaper Guild strike against the Philadelphia *Record* and the Camden *Courier* and *Post*, and the St. Paul, Minn., teachers' strike are in full swing. We have had newspaper strikes before, but the recent series of teachers' walkouts are something new in American life. In the past three months there have been teachers' strikes in Norwalk, Conn., Wilkesbarre Township, Pa., St. Paul, Warren County, Tenn., Fort Dodge, Ia., Pawtucket, R. I. In addition, struggles for salary increases and other improvements which have not yet reached the point of strike action (and I hope won't need to) have been taking place in many parts of the country, including New York City, Minneapolis, Providence, R. I. and Hartford, Conn.

In recent issues of NEW MASSES articles by Charles Humboldt and Meridel Le Sueur have given a vivid picture of some of these struggles. The teachers are battling against salary schedules which in the richest city in the world, New York, start at $1,608 a year—$31 a week. And they are also fighting against the niggardly aid to education which most states provide. It is only out of desperate need and in a spirit of responsibility not only to themselves but to the children and the communities that they band together and as a last resort go out on strike.

Newspapermen, thanks to their union, the American Newspaper Guild, have come a long way since the time, back in 1925, when I worked as a police reporter on the old Philadelphia *Public Ledger* for $15 a week plus "swindle sheet" (a padded expense account) of about $7. But by and large the white-collar groups are the forgotten men and women of capitalist society. For example, 61.9 percent of all finance, insurance and real estate employes, according to Department of Labor figures, have received no wage increase since the war's end; only two percent have received raises of as much as 18½ cents an hour, the pattern established in the CIO strikes early in the year.

Is it any wonder, then, that in the recent election the Republicans, abetted by the crass betrayals of the Truman administration, found the submerged status, confusions and prejudices of the white-collar workers a fertile field for plowing? The swing of middle-class and white-collar voters toward the GOP was perhaps the most graphic expression of what the pollution of the New Deal heritage means in the political thinking of the country.

This is a phenomenon that will require much thought and clearheaded action on the part of all of us who want to build the common man's America free from monopoly rule. Let no one nurse the illusion that labor alone, no matter how strong, can do this job. The little clerks and shopkeepers who cheered themselves hoarse at Nazi meetings and became S.S. gunmen and mass cremation experts should teach us unforgettably that if labor fails to win substantial sections of the middle classes, fascism will. Equally delusory and dangerous is the notion that middle-class liberals can provide the necessary leadership for the American people, with labor tagging along in the rear. However, to lead effectively and to attract farm and middle-class elements in large numbers requires unity in labor's own ranks. That is why it seems to me that Philip Murray's recent appeal to the heads of the AFL and the railroad brotherhoods to meet with those of the CIO has so large a meaning for the entire nation.

NOR can this broad alliance be nourished on retreat and appeasement. Max Lerner spoke much to the point when in *PM* of December 10 he argued against those who say that "labor will now have to adopt defensive measures and make concessions to its enemies lest they destroy the whole of trade unionism." Lerner's emphasis on political action by labor is also sound, though I think he errs in regarding labor's economic job as virtually completed: the majority of the American working class is still unorganized and even the unionized workers have to keep pressing forward if they are not to be driven back.

But besides strength and unity and courageous struggle, the labor movement needs to tackle the problem of the middle class and the farmers in a new way. Appealing to them for support during strikes and forgetting them the rest of the year simply won't do. The economic interests of the dirt farmers, the small businessmen, the professionals, the unorganized white-collar workers have to become the interests of the labor movement. Only by linking up and harmonizing under labor's leadership the needs and aims of all the classes that are lashed by monopoly and of that doubly victimized group, the Negro people, can an independent political movement be built representing an effective majority of the nation. Such a movement must, in my opinion, eventually (the sooner, the better) find its way out of the Republican-Democratic revolving door into a new anti-monopoly, anti-fascist party. The modest beginning toward a people's coalition represented by the Conference of Progressives, which holds its second meeting in Washington January 24, faces a challenge and an opportunity: to become the strong voice of America's millions.

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THE ROOTS OF ANTI-SEMITISM

Only through a basic understanding of its origins can this political weapon of reaction be defeated.

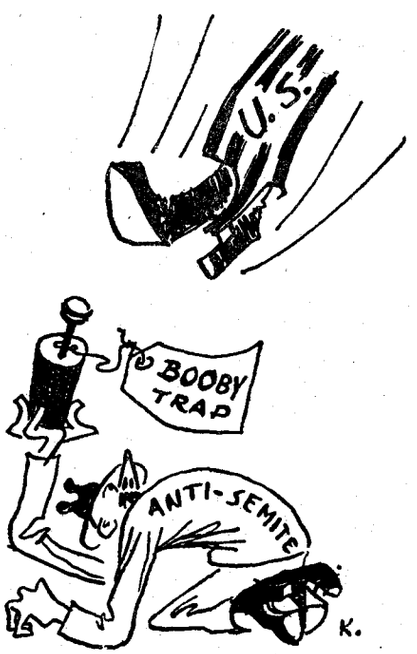
By MORRIS U. SCHAPPES

WITH fascism and imperialism having suffered a major defeat in the recent war, the struggle against these forces is now being waged, for a time at least, with other instruments. The peace is in that sense a continuation of the war with other, peaceable, means: political clarification, education, organization. Imperialism and its legitimate but savage offspring, fascism, live on the confusion and division of peoples. In the labor movement, progressive forces have for some time recognized that anti-Semitism is one of the widely-used means for creating such division. To prevent the dissemination of that fact is one of the main goals of imperialists and of the intellectuals they endow and win for their use. Currently, reactionary forces have begun to stress the psychoanalytic interpretation of anti-Semitism. My interest here is not in psychoanalysis as such, but in the way in which psychoanalysis is being used, or abused, in order to "prove" that anti-Semites are mentally disordered, psychically ill, more to be pitied than feared, to be "cured" rather than fought. The only practical conclusion implied in such psychoanalytic interpretations is that anti-Semitism can be eradicated by psychoanalyzing the anti-Semites or by confining them in asylums.

Attempts to divert attention from the main fact that anti-Semitism is a political problem, with class economic and social roots, are dangerous. In this light, one may welcome the appearance of *An Enemy of the People: Anti-Semitism.** This little volume is the most mature statement on the subject so far made by Mr. Parkes, an Englishman who has devoted almost two decades to a study of the relations between Jews and non-Jews. (It is unfortunate that another publisher has seen fit to issue at this time a slight revision of another volume by Mr. Parkes, *The Jewish Problem in the Modern World*, first published in 1939. Mr. Parkes' intellectual grasp of the problem has matured considerably in one major respect since 1939, but the growth is registered not in the revision but in *An Enemy of the People: Anti-Semitism*, which is much the superior of the two books.)

What Mr. Parkes learned since 1939 is not exactly news to the progressive movement, but it is important to have this knowledge so well presented, so cogently argued on the basis of the experience of several countries, and so inexpensively produced that it can reach a large audience. Mr. Parkes demonstrates that since the 1870's and 1880's anti-Semitism has been a *political* weapon used by reactionary classes against the people's movements, no matter how elementary these movements were in their demands. Anti-Semitism "was a most versatile and effective stick wherewith the conservatives might beat the progressives. Political anti-Semitism had extremely little to do with the Jews as such. . . ." Mr. Parkes fortifies his argument by analyzing the class relations and conflicts of the last quarter of the nineteenth century in Germany, Austria-Hungary, France and Czarist Russia. Even persons who have long accepted Mr. Parkes' thesis are likely to learn something from his pithy summary of the events described, and from his illuminating interpretation of them in terms of class issues. To the student of methodology it will be interesting to note how the same facts, as presented years before in *The Jewish Problem*, lacked this illumination.

FROM this basic element in his analysis he moves more surely than ever before, although not without inconsistencies, to a major conclusion in his program for "the elimination of anti-Semitism." He is sound in recognizing that "the cure of anti-Semitism is intimately bound up with the solution of our national and social problems," and that anti-Semitism will be a problem and a weapon of reaction "so long as the world is a place in which life to ordinary man means insecurity, frustration and unemployment. . . ." If Mr. Parkes does not see world socialism as the world solution to the problem, he does acknowledge the value of the Soviet Union's method of abolishing anti-Semitism. Discussing how, under capitalism, legislation against anti-Semitism is not entirely effective, he adds: "In the Soviet Union such a law also existed, and had no such disadvantages; but that is because it was part of a whole campaign, and not the most important part. For the attack on anti-Semitism took place on a basis of increasing security and employment; in other words, the general situation was favorable. Moreover the center of the campaign was education in racial tolerance within the proletarian society, and anti-Semitism was pilloried as 'bourgeois' and 'reactionary,' which was much more serious than just making it 'il-



*AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE: ANTI-SEMITISM, *by James Parkes. Pelican Books.* 25 *cents.*

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legal.'" And is there not a touch of wistfulness in his comment that in England and the United States "we shall, unfortunately, have to do it without being able to attach the magnificently derogatory word 'bourgeois' to it"? I am not so sure, Mr. Parkes! At least some of us can, and you are welcome to share the use of our accurate epithet.

Nevertheless, the inconsistencies I have mentioned are fundamental and reveal that there are elements of his older type of thinking that he has not yet brought into harmony with his more recent insight into the nature of anti-Semitism as a political weapon.

First there is the half-truth, too often mistaken for the whole truth by too many Jews and their "friends," that the position of the Jew is a dangerous one because he everywhere is, and has been for two thousand years, in a minority. Zionists, orthodox Jews who regard the past two thousand years of Jewish history as a chronicle of "exile," and many liberal non-Jews like Mr. Parkes assert and repeat this half-truth as if it alone were basic to an understanding of the problem. The Jews are a minority in every country, living with a non-Jewish majority, and that is the root of the evil—thus goes the old refrain. But Mr. Parkes himself gives us the clue to what is wrong with this theory when he demonstrates that anti-Semitism is a political weapon. Whose weapon? and against whom is it used? Is it the weapon of the non-Jewish majority against the Jewish minority? Neither history nor contemporary life supports that view. Anti-Semitism is actually the weapon of the *minority*, consisting of the reactionary ruling classes, against the *majority*, composed of the people, including the Jews. It is not that they have been scattered among the nations that has exposed the Jews to persecution; the main factor is that until very recently in every one of the countries in which Jews lived a minority class was ruling a majority and from time to time found it useful to exploit the weapon of anti-Semitism in order to divide, confuse and continue to dominate that majority. In the Soviet Union, for instance, the Jews are a minority, and a very small one, but Mr. Parkes himself does not now say that they are in any way endangered by anti-Semitism. The reason is, of course, that in the Soviet Union there is no minority class ruling the majority by force, deception and anti-Semitic confusion. In other words, anti-Semitism is a product of class relations, and not of the fact that the Jews are dispersed.

If the history of anti-Semitism is long and bloody, the cause is to be found in the fact that all recorded history is the history of class struggles.

Allied to this half-truth of Mr. Parkes' is another one, equally popular. How have the Jews been able to survive, and even increase in number (until Hitler organized the slaughter of six million Jews and brought the Jewish population down to the level of the First World War), despite the long history of anti-Semitism? In *The Jewish Problem*, Mr. Parkes explained it thus: "The feelings of privilege and responsibility which they drew from their religion were the basic causes of the survival of the Jews." This interpretation seems to me thoroughly unsound, for it ascribes an objective fact to a subjective state of mind among religious Jews. Loyalty to a religious ideal cannot prevent an individual or even a people from extermination by superior physical force; religious loyalty *can* prevent an individual or a group from becoming apostates, from renouncing their God, but it cannot prevent them from dying. A noble death is not survival. While, therefore, religious zeal was often a factor in stimulating *resistance*, their faith cannot explain the survival of the Jews.

The theory that their religion was the main factor in their survival goes hand in hand with the theory that the Jews are subjected to anti-Semitism merely because they are a minority. However, these two propositions are fantastic. No minority can survive when the majority outnumbers it as the Jews are outnumbered by non-Jews and when the majority is really determined to destroy that minority. But the simple fact is that the non-Jewish majority in the world has never attempted such a destruction. The very

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fact that the Jews were dispersed in so many lands, and that these lands were unequally developed and continued to develop at uneven rates, has been the greatest factor for the survival of the Jews. When the class relations in Spain became such that in 1492 the ruling powers exiled the Jews, the class relations in North Africa, Turkey, the Balkans, Holland and the newly discovered Western Hemisphere were such that Jews found a welcome and a haven, at least until the class relations in these areas changed and brought into use the political weapon of anti-Semitism. When the class relations and the government-inspired pogroms in Russia in the 1880's drove hundreds of thousands of Jews into emigration, the class relations in the United States made immigration possible.

Had the Jews been concentrated in any one country, and had the class struggles in that country brought into use the weapon of anti-Semitism by a force as ruthless as Hitlerism, for instance, there might not have been any survival of the Jews. Peoples of Africa as numerous as the Jews have been wiped out completely by imperialist oppression. And if Hitler in this past war did not destroy three-thirds instead of one-third of the world Jewish population, he failed in his objective because the others were scattered in countries, particularly the Soviet Union and the United States, where he could not get at them. In other words, it is exactly because the majority of the non-Jews have never been anti-Semitic, despite the flamboyant utterances of the Ben Hechts and similar latter-day prophets of doom-in-exile, that the Jews have survived. And this observation is consistent with Mr. Parkes' evidence that anti-Semitism is a reactionary weapon in the class struggle.

His faulty thinking on the significance of the minority status of the Jews and on the causes of their survival is connected with his dangerous political program for the Jews in Palestine. In this respect he accepts the Zionist "Biltmore Program" of 1942 for a Jewish state that would dominate the Arabs of Palestine. And if the Arabs do not like this solution, Mr. Parkes calmly assures us and them that "there would certainly be room elsewhere for Arabs who might find it intolerable to live under Jewish rule"! Theoretically, it is clear that his concept of anti-Semitism as being caused by the Jews' minority position leads him to look for a solution mainly in the situation in which the Jews would be in a majority. But he forgets the relativity of that majority. Let us suppose that, by some force of arms, British or Anglo-American, the Jewish state is created in a part of Palestine and the Arabs are subdued, allowed to emigrate, or neutralized for a time. The Jewish state in Palestine would then be a tiny power, a majority in relation to itself perhaps, but a tiny minority in relation to the many-millioned populations of the Arab states that surround Palestine on three sides (with the deep blue Mediterranean on the fourth). Can this "power" endure long in a state of hostility with its circumambient Arab neighbors? And how is it to develop "good-neighborly" relations? By allying itself with the imperialism that subjugate and wish to continue to subjugate the restive Arab national liberation movements?

The fatal flaw in Mr. Parkes' thinking on the subject of Palestine is that he regards the Arabs and not British imperialism as the main cause of the problems that exist there. It is not the Arabs but their colonial status in Palestine that is the main problem. The solution can be found only along the lines of a Jewish-Arab anti-imperialist struggle for an independent Palestine, in which the national rights of both Jews and Arabs would be guaranteed.

Without failing to criticize its weaknesses, I can recommend *An Enemy of the People: Anti-Semitism* because, amid its half-truths and inconsistencies, it sheds full light on the basic truth that anti-Semitism is a political weapon of reaction in modern class relations.

portside patter

By BILL RICHARDS

News Item: 42% of the American people believe that the press makes Russia seem worse than it is.

EASTBROOK O'DONNELL REPORTS

(Ed note: Mr. O'Donnell is a leading authority on the Soviet Union, having lived there for five years between 1911 and 1916.)

There is no freedom in the Soviet Union. In that oppressed country it is a crime to incite racial prejudice and all races must work, learn, and play together. A clear-cut violation of individual liberty.

The Russians have no such thing as a free press. The editorial policy of fully 95% of our press is decided by men of such varied ideas as Hearst, McCormick, Howard, and Luce. In Russian papers all the stories, editorials, advertisements, and letters to the editor are written by Stalin himself.

Our big industrialists and members of Congress want to protect the rights of labor unions despite the fact that union members want these rights abolished. The Soviets eliminate labor problems by the sheer trickery of letting the workers own all the factories.

The Russians make no secret of their expansionist plans. The cities of Leningrad and Stalingrad have already been considerably enlarged. The Red Army is also preparing—it is rapidly being demobilized to allow the troops to rest up. There have been reports that the remaining men are being fed uranium tablets.

The standard of living is woefully low in the USSR. I drove around Moscow for hours without seeing a single Cadillac convertible. The people are already resigned to the fact that this year they will only be wearing one pair of shoes at a time.

If the Russian people appear happy and full of hope for the future it is only because Stalin has forced them to be that way.

●

The end of the coal strike came as a great relief to the President's advisers. For awhile it looked as though Truman would finally have to make a speech.

●

Great Britain and the US are opposed to sanctions against Franco. The UN took action despite the stumbling bloc.

●

There are reports that Byrnes is just "itching" to resign. His successor would practically have to start from scratch anyway.

●

The Senate Investigating Committee was a good idea. However, with Ellender heading it the real Bilbo isn't expected to come out in the whitewash.

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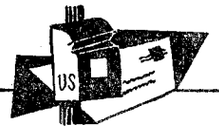
mail call



Guess Who?

To New Masses: One of the problems for survival in any group fighting for liberty is the quisling. The problem is ancient and up to the minute. The most publicized quisling in history is Judas. The word Judas includes a paragraph of meaning—the trusted friend who betrays you to the enemy assassins. George Washington's wrath about Benedict Arnold cannot even be estimated today.

Liam O'Flaherty of all modern writers probably has portrayed the Judas most passionately in *The Informer*—the man who sold his comrade for money.

Let me give you some sample quotations from a newly-published book—and then guess who wrote it. But first of all you must accept the findings of modern psychoanalysis which says that authors delineate themselves or their wishes in their protagonists . . .

P. 55: "Joseph (the protagonist) was struck by the ugliness of the faces around him . . . tonight his revulsion against this assembly of thick, curbed noses, fleshy lips and liquid eyes was particularly strong. At moments it seemed to him he was surrounded by masks of archaic reptiles."

P. 76: the protagonist thinks about "the stigma of the race."

P. 91: ". . . the exiled . . . fight over ideas like dogs over bones. The others call it . . . Semitic intensity."

P. 149: the protagonist noticed "he stood to attention in complete stillness of body—one of the things that Jews as a rule are unable to do."

P. 152: the protagonist describes a group of pioneer girls — "callow, dumb, heavy with their aggressive laughter and unmodulated voices, without tradition, manners, form, style. . . ."

P. 153: the protagonist thinks about "hectic prophets and sick Messiahs from Jesus to Marx and Freud . . . and the final product, the flat-footed, shifty-eyed eternal tramp."

P. 170: a friend of the protagonist says, "the scavenger instinct in all of us . . . you are engrossed in Judaism but don't like the Jews. You love the idea of mankind but not the real man."

P. 221: a correspondent labelled "impartial" says "they stink of ghetto."

P. 260: the protagonist goes on to say, "I can't blame the gentiles if they dislike us." And the impartial correspondent replies, "Since the days of your prophets, self-hatred has been the Jewish form of patriotism." The protagonist continues, "The fact is we are a sick race. Tradition, form, style have all gone overboard. We are a people with a history and no background. . . . [The Ghetto] is there in the wheedling lilt of the women's voices and in the way the men hold themselves with that frozen shrug about their shoulders."

P. 278: the protagonist thinks, "I do not love my people. I rather dislike them."

P. 332: the protagonist, who was educated in England, fools some British guards and thinks, "After all one couldn't expect the Glicksteins to acquire that certain accent" (which he, the protagonist has).

P. 335: "Nazis, fascists and Communists seemed to hold the international monopoly of it" (the tyrannical type).

P. 355: "The loss of the spatial dimension made them cunning and grew them claws to cling on with . . . it increased their spiritual arrogance. . . . Living in bondage, cringing became second nature to their pride. Their natural selector was the whip: it whipped the life out of the feeble and whipped the spasm of ambition into the fit. . . ."

P. 279: the protagonist says, "I became a socialist because I hated the poor; and I became a Hebrew because I hated the Yid."

Now some people may think these quotes came from a serial which originally appeared in Julius Streicher's *Der Stuermer* or Gerald Smith's *Cross and the Flag*.

Who wrote this book? How shall I describe the author, who mobilizes all of Hitler's cliches into a novel? How shall I describe an author who defies the findings of scientists like Boaz and Benedict? If I could write like Liam O'Flaherty describing Gypo Nolan, if I could feel as the Norwegians felt when they muttered Quisling, if I could borrow Washington's wrath when he discovered Benedict Arnold's treachery, if I could feel as the people of Madrid felt when Franco boasted of his Fifth Column in Madrid, if I could feel as Jesus felt when he learned about Judas, then I could describe the man who wrote the above quotes.

All I can do is say the author is Arthur Koestler, a "liberal" Jew, who lived in Palestine and enjoyed the hospitality, love and friendship of the struggling people of Palestine.

The Communists say Koestler is a Trotskyite. I think Koestler is a koestler and I predict the word will live as the word quisling lives and the word Judas lives and the words Benedict Arnold live.

Norman Burnside.

New York.

Appeal from Finland

To New Masses: Now that the Communists in Finland are free to function again, the party is organizing schools to train leaders. The students are largely workers and education is uppermost. Party membership is now about 40,000. That is not too bad in view of the fact that the party has had only about two years of legal existence and that many of its leaders died in concentration camps from torture or from hunger. I was fortunate to survive, although I and others sometimes wonder how we managed to keep alive on a diet that included grass, snakes, worms and frogs. We are moving ahead and we will continue to do so. In addition to our growing party membership there are forty Communists in the House of Representatives and three in the cabinet.

I call on our American friends to help us in our educational work. What we urgently need are curtains, tablecloths, stockings, soap, coffee, tea, sugar, tobacco, alarm clocks and fountain pens. Please send them to me at:

Sirola-Opisto
Helsinki, Lauttasaari
Myllykallio, Finland

Toimi Tanner.

Helsinki.

Spotlight on South Africa

To New Masses: I am a lawyer practicing in Johannesburg for the last twenty-four years and I am glad to see that the spotlight has now been turned upon the Union of South Africa. This country's leaders have at last been placed in the dock.

The history of South Africa's dealings with its own non-European citizens is not such as to inspire any democrat, conversant with the facts, with any degree of confidence in this country's ability or desire to extend elementary human rights to the Africans living in Southwest Africa, who, if General Smuts had his way, would be "shanghaied" into the Union.

This Dominion, with a population of nearly 11,000,000 persons, extends the right to vote only to its 2,500,000 white citizens. The African, although a taxpayer, has no rights of citizenship. He is debarred from skilled industry, his trade unions are not recognized by law, and he is denied the right to strike and to collective bargaining. Discriminatory legislation prohibits him from acquiring land in the urban areas, and forces him to carry a "pass" in order to restrict his movements, thereby depriving him of the right to seek free employment. Over 100,000 Africans are thrown into jail every year for contraventions of these laws, which are directed solely against our non-white population. Neither socially, politically nor eco-

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nomically is the non-European given equality with his white compatriot.

If he works in the mines the African is segregated in barracks to which his family is not allowed access. His average wage, while so employed, is approximately £54 (about $250) per annum. In the towns he is forced to live in Townships or in Municipal Compounds under conditions of squalor and abject misery. At least seventy percent of the Africans suffer from malnutrition, and hospital and medical services are completely unable to cope with the incidence of sickness and disease.

Even today, over twelve months after the end of the war, war emergency regulations originally passed for the ostensible purpose of dealing with the supporters of fascism in this country (and seldom invoked for that purpose) are still retained for use against the African in order to deprive him of the elementary rights of freedom of speech and freedom of movement. War Measure 1425 imposes heavy penalties on Africans who gather in groups of more than twenty. The Asiatic Land Tenure Bill, appropriately termed the "Ghetto Act," segregates the Asiatic population from the European and forces the Asiatics to live in the ghettos. On the other hand our local fascists, such as Dr. Malan, Advocate Pirow and van Rensburg, who openly, in speech and in print, supported Hitler during the war, are allowed the use of public halls and are permitted to publish newspapers and articles in support of their fascist and racist theories.

These and many other facts are known to every non-European in South Africa. A history of savage brutality against, and of heartless exploitation of, the non-white, of killings by rifle, bayonet and machinegun, of floggings and of imprisonment, is one for which General Smuts and our political leaders will assuredly one day have to answer. And despite the fact that every dark-skinned person is aware of this history, South Africa endeavored to persuade the world that the majority of Africans in Southwest Africa want to be incorporated into the Union instead of being placed under the Trusteeship of the UN. To suggest that black Southwest Africa desires to come into the Union is false; it is lying hypocrisy.

It is true that thirty years of propaganda has built for Smuts an overseas reputation for liberalism. We in South Africa, however, know the truth. It is time that the world outside South Africa should know these facts. It is time that liberal opinion should know that when General Smuts at the UN pleads for the incorporation of Southwest Africa into the Union of South Africa on the grounds that the Africans resident there desire such incorporation, such plea is being made by a man who, to the knowledge of 8,500,000 colored and many white South Africans, has never had regard for any democratic right, if the provision of such a right entailed the sacrifice of his political position or the financial interests of the Chamber of Mines. It is time that the world recognized Smuts' liberal verbiage as being what we democrats in this country know it to be—just plain humbug.

V. C. BERRANGE.

Johannesburg, South Africa.

More on Bodenheim

TO NEW MASSES: I have not seen *The Collected Poems of Maxwell Bodenheim, 1914-44*, reviewed by David Silver in your issue of October 22. But I do object to the narrow premises of that review. A man who has left the permanent imprint upon American literature of Maxwell Bodenheim certainly deserves a less smug and more sensitive review than the one that he received in NM.

To me, the chief fault in Mr. Silver's review is the arbitrary and purely personal definition that he sets up for "great" poetry: "that it does not persuade the reader to share the poet's experience—it compels the reader to create the very same experience for himself so far as his own sensitivity permits."

This may be fine hair-splitting but it is very shabby literary criticism. If we reason dialectically, persuasion and compulsion, like form and subject, are not in opposition to each other but are related parts of the same creative process. Certainly, a man working with the medium of words has first to persuade his reader of some truth before he can compel him to act upon that truth. Mr. Silver's definition is, therefore, nothing but ivory towerism even if the walls of the tower are decorated with scarlet hammer-and-sickles instead of cerise elephants.

If you follow Mr. Silver's definition to its ultimate, then you must erase from the category of "great poetry" such consciously persuasive verse as that of Whitman and Mayakovsky. And much other poetry, intended both to compel and persuade men to action, would go by the board.

The rest of Mr. Silver's appraisal of Bodenheim reflects the same limited range of critical judgment. It is logical, therefore, that he should take some back-handed jibes at a man who has earned more accolades than bread in this fiercely competitive society, where most men of letters are luftmenschen, by chiding the poet for lapsing into "bohemianism."

I used to run into Max Bodenheim quite a bit in New York and Chicago; I haven't seen him during the last few years. But any genuinely social critic cannot approach a poet—in his greatness or his smallness, from the moral criteria of a small-town reading club.

The critic, to be worthy of the name, must have some understanding of the forces which leave a poet to starve on a park bench at the same time that his work is being read throughout the world. He must have a social base for understanding the idiosyncrasies that any sensitive person would develop under the circumstances. Actually, Mr. Silver fails to realize this one basic fact: that in the long period when American monopoly had no militant labor movement to dispute its power and give us all new cultural values, "bohemianism," if only for an ephemeral period, was a challenge to the culture exemplified at one pole by John D. Rockefeller and at the other by Zane Grey. For an artist today to return to "bohemianism" is, of course, a reversion to an epoch which has been superseded by another age.

But I am deeply concerned with the school of criticism represented by Mr. Silver—for he is not the only offender—and the dangerous tendency that this school represents in the development of a genuinely free American culture. The tight schemata of that school will, if permitted, choke everything that cannot find root in its closely-sealed intellectual hothouses. For it is barren of the breadth, the understanding, and the humanity which social critics, of all commentators upon books, should have.

Mr. Bodenheim is not a great poet in the commonly-accepted meaning of the term, but he is certainly a major one.

HAROLD PREECE.

New York.

By-Product

TO NEW MASSES: A little known result of the recent sit-down strike by the meat packers should be of interest to your readers.

When meat was withheld from the legal market, the black market manipulators bought cattle and slaughtered on their own account. However, they were so anxious to get the meat on the market at the exorbitant prices being offered that they did not worry about the by-products which are usually carefully preserved by the legal meat processors. These by-products (pancreas glands, etc.) are used in the manufacture of insulin. As you know, those suffering with diabetes must have insulin to remain alive.

The consequences of this black market spree in meat has been a shortage of these by-products and an acute shortage of the raw materials necessary for the manufacture of insulin. The net result will be a fifty percent or more increase in the price of insulin. This is another example of the functioning of "free enterprise." Of course, the government could have stepped in to control the situation but that, we are told, would have been interference bordering on "socialism."

JOSEPH SPENCER.

New York.

Correction

TO NEW MASSES: Please correct the name of a famous Yiddish writer whom Nathan Ausubel, in his article on Sholem Aleichem [NM, November 26], calls "Judah L. Peretz." His name is Isaac L. Peretz.

I. FOLKOFF.

San Francisco, Cal.

I am grateful to Mr. Folkoff for his correction. My error was due to a mental slip. —N.A.

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review and comment

FROM THE BOOKSHELF

SOVIET PHILOSOPHY: A Study of Theory and Practice, *by John Somerville. Philosophical Library.* $3.75.

IT IS something of an event when an American philosopher, on a travelling fellowship from Columbia University, goes to the Soviet Union to study philosophy. It is still more of an event when he brings forth an honest, serious and sympathetic interpretation of what he found. Books there have been by Americans on most every aspect of Soviet life and culture—but none, to my knowledge, on its philosophy. Dr. Somerville deserves great credit, therefore, for undertaking the task of expounding the principles and methods of this philosophy in the interest of better understanding of Soviet theory and practice.

At the outset something may be said about the title of the book. Soviet thinkers would be the last to claim that there is a "Soviet" philosophy. There is in the world today the philosophy of the bourgeoisie, no matter in what varied forms it is manifested, and the philosophy of class conscious workers, Marxism. The essentials of the philosophy Dr. Somerville found in the Soviet Union, therefore, can be found in England and South Africa, in China, France and the United States. It is the philosophy of Marxists everywhere. It belongs to no country but to a class. It is international, and owes its origin and major development to Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Its roots are to be found in classical philosophy, especially French materialism and German thought from Kant to Hegel, in classical political economy, and in French and British utopian socialism. This is not to deny that in the Soviet Union it has achieved its fullest development to date and has exerted the greatest influence. It is merely to assert that the subject under discussion is more properly denoted Marxist philosophy than *Soviet*. Accordingly, it was necessary that the bulk of the book—all but the last two chapters, in fact—be devoted to an exposition of the basic principles of dialectical and historical materialism, with close references to developments and applications of this philosophy to the distinctive new features of a functioning socialist society—such, for example, as the Soviet Constitution, the role of art under socialism, religious freedom and the like.

The chapters "Pivotal Controversies in the History of Soviet Philosophy" and "Dissemination of Philosophy in the USSR" (VII and VIII) contain a significant body of material derivable only from Soviet sources distinctively representing philosophy in the Soviet Union. Here are exciting materials and one could wish that the whole book were constructed out of the actual controversies in philosophy that have taken place among Soviet thinkers: the concrete developments and application of materialist dialectics to problems of socialist construction, international relations, etc., especially as found in the reports and writings of Joseph Stalin; Soviet studies in the history of philosophy, in special technical fields such as dialectics, epistemology, philosophy of science; and in the analyses of and polemics against our major contemporary bourgeois philosophers and schools. It is to be hoped that Dr. Somerville, with his undoubted equipment for this task, will undertake a book along such lines in the not too distant future.

In these two chapters there is the picture of a society which takes philosophy seriously. Philosophy is "disseminated" both through teaching and publication, with the figures on the latter assuming astronomical proportions (not really done justice to by the table on p. 236). Philosophical controversies exist, and they have two striking features for Americans. They attract wide public attention and the disputants, really believing in objective truth, try to reach agreement through prolonged efforts at clarification. Here in these pages the issues between materialism and idealism, mechanical and dialectical thinking, take on reality and life by leaving the realm of "pure" philosophical speculation.

The main body of the work consists of an excellent, clear and fresh presentation of the main features of dialectical and historical materialism. This discussion of basic perspectives is followed by a valuable analysis of "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." Chapters on Soviet ethics and the arts follow.

Part II is devoted to a lucid and precise analysis of the main features of dialectical materialism. Chapter VI, entitled: "The Human Mind: The Dialectical Method of Thinking," is a positive new contribution to the subject, because of its extraordinarily astute analysis of that "formal" logic in contrast to which dialectics had its origin and derives its meaning. Dr. Somerville's own formulation of dialectical rules for thinking should be to many readers an immensely helpful guide to the laws of dialectics and their practical application.

All in all there is so much here of value both to those who want to understand the Soviet Union better and to those who want to understand the fundamentals of Marxism, that one hopes for a cheap popular edition of *Soviet Philosophy*. Limitations it has, some of which have been pointed out. One regrettable defect is that John Dewey is quoted twice, with passages that might make him seem close to Marxist thought, thus omitting the

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more important issue that he is not only a sworn enemy of everything Soviet but also that his "instrumentalism" is antithetic to dialectical materialism, and not merely "weak" (p. 97). Another is the inclusion of two works of Trotsky in the guide to reading on Soviet thought. This inclusion is gratuitous, unlike that of Bukharin who figures in the chapter on controversies, especially since the one work of Trotsky's explicitly used is cited in the text. A more far-reaching and serious criticism is that Lenin's major philosophical contributions are inadequately treated. Especially is this the case with the technique and principles Lenin developed in his criticism of the Machians in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. These provide the basis for the critique of the current bourgeois schools of positivism and pragmatism. The failure to expound Lenin's polemics leads to the neglect of the basic issue in all modern philosophy—a materialist versus an idealist epistemology or theory of knowledge—and through this the neglect of any real critique of contemporary bourgeois philosophy, a most basic problem for all Soviet philosophers and for Marxists everywhere.

HOWARD SELSAM.

Miss Perkins' FDR

THE ROOSEVELT I KNEW, *by Frances Perkins. Viking.* $3.75.

FRANCES PERKINS' portrait of the Roosevelt she knew during a period of thirty-five years will contribute to the cause of world peace in much the same manner as did Elliott Roosevelt's *As He Saw It.*

For the former Secretary of Labor's intimate recollections of FDR not only reemphasize the solidity of his devotion to the principle of genuine Anglo-Russian-American cooperation; they help also to puncture the current fiction that the President died embittered by the "failure" of his policies and would have out-jingoed Byrnes and Vandenberg had he lived.

Miss Perkins' book, while its chronology includes most of FDR's adult life and his entire political career, makes no pretense at being comprehensive and definitive either as biography or political history.

To Miss Perkins, the young Roosevelt she met first in 1910 was somewhat self-righteous, aloof, impervious to the needs and hopes of the rank and file American. Like others who knew him well, she lays much stress upon the ordeal of recovery from infantile paralysis as a prime factor in his development into a leader of great personal warmth and sympathies and broad social consciousness. Much of *The Roosevelt I Knew* is devoted to incidents drawn from Miss Perkins' association with FDR as Cabinet member and as New York State Industrial Commissioner — incidents which make clear why he became by far the best beloved American public figure of his day.

Often penetratingly shrewd in her observations about Roosevelt and his philosophy, Miss Perkins describes him as compensating for his lack of developed program by his courage to be boldly experimental and unfettered by the narrow, self-interested conventions and motivations of the rich who loathed him as a "traitor to his class." He was by background and conviction a supporter of the prevailing capitalist economy; but he also believed that reforms were necessary to keep it going. By his own description "a little left of center," Roosevelt's great merit was that he responded to the movement of the workers and the common people toward struggle and self-organization by taking up the battle against economic royalism.

Miss Perkins says that "Roosevelt was not very familiar with economic theory," but in this sphere as in the many others which engaged his active interest he was often able to reach the core of problems while men with more expert knowledge floundered amid non-essentials. The author recalls FDR's observation on the Russian people's devotion to their socialist society, after his return from a Big Three conference: "They all seem really to want to do what is good for their society instead of wanting to do for themselves. We take care of ourselves and think about the welfare of society afterward."

Much of the book reviews the development of the New Deal program of social legislation at home during the twelve years in which Roosevelt served in the White House. Miss Perkins brings vividly to mind again the impact of those years of sweeping progress in the rights and standards of the American people. True, many of the author's historical estimates will seem naive (or something else) and her underestimation of the people's struggle may irritate many readers. Her faith in the general good intentions and reasonableness of American industrialists contrasts with labor's overwhelming experience to the contrary.

However, such flaws are secondary in relation to the specific service this book performs in recalling not only the progressive Roosevelt policies for peaceful world collaboration and social advancement of the American people, but also the successes achieved by the application of those policies. The great mass of the American people who were supporters of those policies, which they identified with FDR, cannot, if they read such books as this, but be convinced of the disastrous divergence from the Roosevelt policies engineered by his successor in office at the insistence of the men FDR labelled "economic royalists."

Undoubtedly, Miss Perkins' is not the fullest or the last word on the Roosevelt personality. But her first-hand story will surely be helpful when someone attempts to fit all the pieces together for the complete mosaic of the man whom Stalin estimated as the strongest captain of the modern capitalist world.

ROBERT FRIEDMAN.

Jumbo Epic

FERDINAND AND ISABELLA, *by Hermann Kesten. A. A. Wyn.* $3.

HERMANN KESTEN'S faults are as striking as his virtues. Whatever he writes is written with force, with imagination, with a richness of expression that brings the subject to life, indeed to a kind of technicolor Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer sort of super-life. There may have been dull, apathetic, passionless moments in Ferdinand's and Isabella's life, but they aren't in Kesten's book. Here it is all color, all emotion, all baroque or even rococo.

The result certainly carries one along. A little too violently, I am afraid. Usually the jacket blurb writer oversells the contents of a book with meretricious purple passages. Here the blurb writer pants breathlessly way behind the book. "In Mr. Kesten's searching analysis of his characters and their era, Isabella emerges as one of the most extraordinary personalities of all time, both pious and passionate, at once ruthless and oddly soft. Around her, described in Mr. Kesten's rich and flowing prose, are countless other memorable figures: Ferdinand himself, Torquemada. . . . With a background as strongly colored, as barbaric, as the

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"Past Forty," lithograph by Joseph Vogel.

period, *Ferdinand and Isabella* is more than a historical novel. It is a great book."

Of course the blurb writer's "countless other memorable figures" gives the show away. For the word "countless" implies the very opposite of the word "memorable." A single memorable figure would have been fine. But by becoming countless the figures naturally become not memorable but rather confused, lost, merged into a kind of bouillabaisse in which the contents are indistinguishable.

The blurb writer is also revealing in what he says about Kesten's portrayal of Isabella. The fact is that by being everything, by being so contradictory and so unpredictable as to keep the reader in a state of perpetual amazement, Isabella finally ceases to emerge. She dazzles one into a kind of blindness in which her outlines simply disappear. By being every character she ends up being no character at all.

Of course historically Isabella as portrayed by Kesten may be nearer the true Isabella than some other more skillfully portrayed Isabella might be. But the novelist-historian must present a historical figure as the heroine of a novel, a heroine conceived entirely in the novelist's mind to be the central figure of his tale. The Isabella who expelled the Jews is at the same time the Isabella who gave ships to Columbus. Isabella who tortured and murdered thousands for the sake of filling her treasury is at the same time the beautiful and beloved queen whose story the reader is supposed to want to follow with interest. Milton, they say, fell in love with Satan, and Kesten at times falls in love with Isabella. Then suddenly he remembers that she expelled the Jews, and he turns the most withering scorn upon her. The reader suddenly tumbles out of the warm bed of a novel and into a cold tub of history.

Not that the cold historical tub isn't as invigorating as the warm romantic bed. Both, as prepared by Kesten, are superb. But the two together add up as a book rather than as a novel. And the whole effect is like that curious excitement induced by a moving picture trailer. Every scene is climactic. There is a mounting tension induced by swelling music and by words flung at the audience: colossal! titanic! love! hate! gigantic spectacle! The net effect, as we all know, is singularly empty. On the other hand it is certainly never dull or boring.

In reviewing Mr. Kesten's previous novel, *The Twins of Nuremberg*, I said pretty much the same thing I am saying now. I say it now with considerably more regret and more feeling. I went to the trouble then to pick out some of the episodes in that book that I considered superior writing. I could do the same for this book. I could call attention to the death scene of King Henry, the conquest of Granada, the Columbus story, etc. But I would still have to conclude that the whole in this case, as in the last, somehow doesn't add up to the sum of the parts. In a less gifted writer it would be enough to say that the whole just doesn't add up. In Kesten's case that would be most unfair. I, for one, shall look forward to Kesten's next book with considerable anticipation.

GUY ENDORE.

German Adano

THE LIBERATORS, *by Wesley Towner. A. A. Wyn.* $2.50.

IN THE last phase of World War II on the Western Front, American troops reached far into eastern Germany—into what was later to become the Russian zone of occupation. Wesley Towner's story takes place in a town in eastern Germany as the war ended in May, 1945. The combat men of Col. Carruthers' regiment were tired, hungry for women and did not show much insight into either the causes of the war or their relations with the Germans. The Germans themselves are shown to be crafty, submissive on the surface, and contemptuous of the political naivete of the Americans. The women melted

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into the arms of the Americans in an interesting blend of feelings which included expressions of fear of the Russians and of hunger—all kinds of hunger, from sex to chocolate. The Americans were not immune. They had admired the Red Army men during the fighting war. But this was different. Now they began to express resentment at the Russian soldier—a resentment conjured out of the monstrous shape of the guilty fear that lived within the Germans.

There was little to alter the drift of things. Col. Carruthers was inept and indifferent; Capt. Casima, whose civilian career had been spent in a vague connection with "the catch-penny politics of Jersey City," didn't have a scruple in him. Sgt. Christopher Day wanted to give the town a good administration. He had been, in civil life, a college English instructor; he had some knowledge of the politics of the situation plus a sense of responsibility. To Col. Carruthers' role of absolute, temperamental and ignorant monarch of this German town, Sgt. Day could, for a while, play the part of an efficient, honest prime minister. But not for too long.

What seems more important in Towner's novel than its fictional virtues is its documentary value. Though here and there you find glimpses of the heightened values demanded by fiction, *The Liberators* is more a good journalistic report than a recreated experience. In plot outline it resembles rather too closely Hersey's *Bell For Adano*. There, you will remember, the general orders all carts off the roads; in *The Liberators*, another general who has a prohibition mania orders all beer distribution among troops to cease forthwith. Throughout, the honest men are being defeated by inertia, and by the incompetent and reactionary hand of Higher Authority—but a little too patly to be effective.

However, Towner demonstrates the bankruptcy of regimes whose single guiding principle is a morbid enmity of the Left. Because the big estates around the town were "private property" it became "socialistic" to grant landless farmers permission to plant crops. The logical ironies of the American position in Germany become, in the end, the living tragedies of plain people. This is what Towner is after—and he tells it with more truth than fiction.

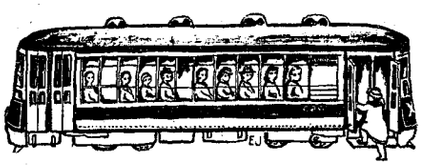
ALFRED GOLDSMITH.

With Honesty

ACCENT ANTHOLOGY, *edited by Kerker Quinn and Charles Shattuck. Harcourt, Brace.* $4.

As THEIR very name implies, even the most successful of the "little" magazines reaches no more than a few thousand very un-average readers. Among those whom they do not reach —the millions who read *Life* and the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Reader's Digest*, or more likely the tens of thousands who read *Harper's* or *The New Yorker*—there are no doubt a certain number of people who might become readers if they were not deterred by their conception of a "little" magazine as some sort of freakish publication adorned with "modernistic" decorations and bristling with literary manifestoes and unintelligible poems in chopped-up line lengths. It seems pertinent to report that this conception has been less and less accurate for a good many years. To bring it up to date, one could not do better than to consult the present *Accent Anthology*, which is drawn from one of the best, if not the most representative, of the little magazines.

Accent was founded in 1940 by a group of editors centered around the University of Illinois at Urbana, with the announced purpose of serving as a "representative collection of the best creative and critical writing of our time, carefully balancing the work of established authors with that of comparative unknowns." Like most other little magazines of the last decade, it had from the beginning an aim quite distinct from that of so many publications of the 1920's, devoted to esthetic experiment for experiment's sake. The editors announced that they would reject not only the "stereotyped" but also "the trivial and the unintelligible" from their pages. Their anthology, collecting the best from five years of publication, indicates on the whole a successful pursuit of their original purpose. It consists mainly of honest and serious writing, free of the big-business pressures which turn the big magazines into more or less glorified advertising circulars.



E. Jaediker.

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More than most of its rivals in the little magazine field, which is increasingly shadowed by the repressive influence of university patronage, *Accent* has managed also to resist these pressures as they are exerted beneath the disguise of the academic cap and gown. It is the most eclectic of the little magazines. Thus one will even find in the pages of this anthology the work of writers who have also contributed to NEW MASSES, such as Sidney Alexander, Edwin Berry Burgum, Ernest and Marjorie Brace and Ben Field. One will find in addition, particularly in the field of criticism, the work of writers on whom Marxist thinking has been an important influence, such as Eric Bentley, Kenneth Burke, David Daiches, F. O. Matthiesen, Harry Slochower. Then, too, one will find the work of a number of young writers published for the first time in *Accent*, along with contributions from such well-established writers as Thomas Mann, Katherine Anne Porter and Irwin Shaw (and this is a phenomenon much less usual than it ought to be in most little magazines today). In its acceptance both of young and unknown writers and of writers with a progressive political orientation, *Accent* exhibits an open-mindedness hardly characteristic of the little magazine field in recent years, increasingly dominated as the latter has been by a kind of pedantic and obscurantist neo-scholasticism.

Judged by any but a relative standard, the record of a magazine like *Accent* may leave much to be desired. Certainly it is apt to make one feel that a country as well-equipped with the material means for culture as ours should be able to produce something better—should be able, if a defeated and poverty-stricken nation like France can support more than a dozen serious literary magazines, monthlies with mass circulations, to do better than produce a tiny handful of quarterlies like *Accent* which reach audiences of less than 5,000 and mostly look to universities for subsidization. And yet *Accent's* showing is so much better than nothing—and it comes so dangerously near to representing the last and only hope of "free" enterprise in American magazine publishing—that anybody who cares about the fate of serious writing ought to be thankful for it. If one hopes for more than *Accent* has been able to give, certainly one must concede that without more active aid from both writers and readers than *Accent* or any other little magazine has yet received, there is little possibility of that hope's realization.

WALTER MCELROY.

The Grabbers

BATTLE FOR CHICAGO, *by Wayne Andrews. Harcourt, Brace.* $3.75.

MR. ANDREWS' absorbing volume is primarily, though with a variety of undercurrents, the story of a group of men with one simple philosophy—get the money quick, hold on to what you've got, and keep on getting more. The philosophy, of course, is as old as man's world and almost as widespread. The high priest of the Chicago cult was the imperial Marshall Field I, a "businessman's businessman" who, by the time he died, had accumulated the tidy sum of one hundred and twenty million dollars. He had "subjected the making of money to scientific analysis."

Nevertheless, in the company that here surrounds him—Swift, Armour, Joseph Medill, Cyrus McCormick, George Mortimer Pullman, Samuel Insull, C. T. Yerkes, Jr.—the elder Field looks like a cherub with pink wings. Typical of the acts and the thoughts of these men are those of the inventor of the Pullman car, and the early publisher of the Chicago *Tribune*. Mr. Pullman, solemn and hypocritical, will live in the annals of infamy for his "model community"—which was always to yield a six percent profit, and in which "rents were twenty to twenty-five percent higher than anywhere in the vicinity"—and the vicious labor policy that brought first the Pullman strike, then the militia, and finally the killing of twelve workingmen. Quite as much do the thoughts of Joseph Medill—Mr. Andrews ironically terms him an "intellectual"—teem with hate. Here he is on race: "In future wars black and yellow men will be used freely to fight. We will not be so careful about spilling the blood of niggers." Or on the American sport of lynching: "Judge Lynch is an American, by birth and character. . . . The Vigilance Committee is a peculiarly American institution. Every lamppost in Chicago will be decorated with a communistic carcass if necessary to prevent wholesale incendiarism. . . ."

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apostle of hate, "Bertie" McCormick. Publisher and editor of the self-styled World's Greatest Newspaper, "Bertie" almost burst a blood vessel when Marshall Field III entered the Chicago newspaper area with his *Sun*. Nervous, McCormick stated of Field, "The term to fit to him and to all the herd of hysterical effeminates is 'coward'." Field calmly continued on his way, exposing McCormick's hysterical discoveries of Communist plots, and pouncing on such statements as that the merchant marine was "no credit to our nation." A *Sun* editorial replied, "A ship of a *Tribune* subsidiary had been torpedoed at sea and the crew so forgot their loyalty to the lord of the tower as to save their lives by leaving the ship. . . . What's more the merchant sailors belonged to unions! That makes their treason to McCormick double."

Today there *is* a battle for Chicago, and the people as well as the industrial capitalists are in the fight. Mr. Andrews shows it and does so well.

JAMES LIGHT.

Ten Poets

THE NOBLE VOICE: A STUDY OF TEN GREAT POEMS, *by Mark Van Doren. Holt.* $3.

EVEN reading for pleasure imposes judgments, as Mark Van Doren discovers in the course of reviewing the works of nine "noble" poets. He is compelled to assert that only an intense belief in life and in the fundamental vigor of men can produce genuine poets. Homer, Dante, Chaucer—all three saw as the poet's theme "the objects of earth," "the real world." They become the author's heroes only because they alone realize that building a poem requires the "art of being true to what one knows and sees."

Virgil, Lucretius, Milton, Spenser, Byron and Wordsworth, the remaining poets dealt with in *The Noble Voice*, are on the other hand considered less noble. Lucretius, for example, is labeled a minor genius because (this criticism is indirectly stated) the Roman poet's materialistic philosophy would seem to deny man's uniqueness, his possession of an impalpable soul! Here the author certainly manifests a Victorian squeamishness. If Lucretius doesn't measure up to the standards of Dante, it is not because the former believes in atoms while the latter believes in God.

The subordinate position given Byron is a little more reasonable. Staunch belief is always necessary in a poet, and Byron did attack without belief, without in his works achieving "serenity over satire." What Mark Van Doren has overlooked, however, in his zeal to discover flaws in style, is that Byron throughout his life acted on a passionate belief in political freedom.

The book as a whole, it must be said, is a little unbalanced. The Pulitzer Prize poet's emphasis on Milton's stylistic blunders, for example, hardly allows Milton his genius. And his chapter on Chaucer is so short that he does not sufficiently justify himself in placing Chaucer among the peerless poets. He seems, furthermore, to be a little unsure about his feelings for Virgil and Wordsworth. This hesitation is understandable in the light of his inadequate reasoning. Virgil did not fail because of his ethical and political emphasis. To say this is to babble in the style of the sterile art-for-art's-sake critics. He failed—insofar as he did—because he wasn't political enough. Virgil was shackled because Augustus was his patron, and he felt doomed to extol the Roman culture that he himself must have known was very shoddy. In praising the bitter times of Rome, he could not be true to what he knew and saw.

The interpretation of Wordsworth is the most unfortunate in the book. Wordsworth's *Prelude* is not unworthy because of the burdensome, obscure philosophy preached in it. On the other hand, whatever greatness it has is not due to the pretty pictures contained in it. It is unsuccessful in the main because of the effect of Wordsworth's defection from progressive ranks—his rejection in 1792 of the French Revolution. ("Just for a handful of silver he left us. Just for a riband to stick in his coat.") Van Doren correctly emphasizes Wordsworth's feelings on the French Revolution as significant in his poetic development, but the author does not relate the English poet's real failure as a major poet to the reactionary attitude he developed toward the Revolution. In exalting nature at the expense of a sincere belief in man Wordsworth was again, in effect, turning away from the achievement of the Revolution.

But there is no doubt that this is a book written by a poet who sincerely loves and enjoys great poetry. He has an intelligent and sensitive approach to

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E. Miller

literature. His sections on Homer are excellent. Indeeed, no other chapters equal them in their healthy exuberance and analysis.

HARRIET HAMBARIN.

Christmas Package

CONFESSIONS OF A STORY WRITER, *by Paul Gallico. Knopf.* $3.75.

PAUL GALLICO, possibly the most prolific and successful seller of stories to the "name" mags—*Saturday Evening Post, Cosmopolitan, Colliers, American* et al—has selected his twenty-four favorite stories, prefaced each with an autobiographical "story behind the story," and wrapped them up in an interesting book.

Into the realm of slick mags, high-powered agents and $1,000 acceptance checks Gallico carried all the virtues of good American sports writing, but along with them he took the weaknesses—glibness, too-finished slickness, and an absence of the deep, slow perception and genuine humanism of more significant writers. Within his limits, which are the limits of the slicks and their gaudy skirting of social meaning, the man can really write. All his stories are charged with a sense of excitement, with what the trade calls "pace."

Probably his best tales are those with a newspaper background. Writing of something he knows thoroughly, as in the yarn "McKabe," Gallico gets over a certain ring of honesty along with his excitement. Like Broun, and unlike Pegler, who never really liked sports, Gallico returns for themes to his first love fairly often. Four of the stories in this collection revolve around sports subjects. Three of them are good. The fourth is a thing called "Stopwatch," written at the time of the Soviet-Finnish war, which has all the hamminess of the incredible "news" stories of that period. Its inclusion at this late date in history is a little shocking.

His stories, however, are not marked with the cynicism one might expect of the calculating seller to the slicks which he describes himself to be. He likes people, and shows a simple emotional symphony with the underdog. But often this descends to the Damon Runyon type of humaneness, brittle with saccharine whimsy, certainly no substitute for real social understanding.

Gallico is not an easy writer to estimate. He's too superb a story teller to dismiss lightly. At the end of his introduction he says suprisingly, "I mean yet to accomplish something." This could be self-complacent fishing for quick assurance that he has already done "something." It could, at least partly, also be the deep-down knowledge by the man who broke his mold with a "Joe Smith, American," that writing successfully for the editors of the great American slicks is, in a real sense, nothing.

LESTER RODNEY.

When the Bomb Fell

HIROSHIMA, *by John Hersey. Knopf.* $1.75.

WHAT the Hiroshima atom bomb blast did to six humans is the burden of John Hersey's now-famous report, here issued in book form.

What emerges is much larger. By painstakingly probing into the lives and actions of six survivors of the Hiroshima slaughter—a clerk, a widowed seamstress, a physician, a Methodist minister, a young surgeon and a German Catholic priest—the author frames the full picture of Hiroshima, August 6, 1945, and the still larger picture of the effect on generations of Hiroshimans to come.

Mr. Hersey recreates death by his awareness and feeling for lives—so that the reader has a sense of suffering identification with the meaning of the hitherto unimaginable "flash in the sky," which destroyed some 78,000 lives, wounded some 37,000 others, and razed two-thirds of a modern city.

To translate the idiom of a man in Hiroshima to the terms of a man on Main Street, without changing the individuality and national characteristics of the Hiroshiman, is to assert the universality of man—and Mr. Hersey has accomplished this by his fundamental and sympathetic understanding of people as they are. His eye and ear deftly record their sacrifices and selfishness, their humor, despair and ingenuity in a moment of disaster. He uses no writer's tricks; he lets the stark facts of Hiroshima speak for themselves.

ALAN STOLTMAN.

Elizabethan Poet

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE: A Study of His Thought, Learning and Character, *by Paul H. Kocher. University of North Carolina Press.* $3.50.

IT IS not surprising that Christopher Marlowe should have attracted the attention of a number of biographers and critics in recent years. He is one of the most fascinating figures in the history of English literature: one of the greatest of Elizabethan poets and dramatists, he was perhaps the most original and independent thinker of them all. The strange facts of his sudden death by violence, with their implications of deliberate murder, have given a lurid, melodramatic interest to the study of his life.

Prof. Kocher's book is the most useful, as well as the most complete treatment of Marlowe's thought that has yet appeared. Most scholars, alarmed by the boldness of Marlowe's ideas as reported by his contemporaries, Kyd and Baines, have attempted to show that Marlowe did not hold those ideas seriously and that, in any case, they did not perceptibly influence his dramatic work. Prof. Kocher, however, argues that Marlowe's atheistic beliefs were strongly held and that they can be definitely traced in his work.

The value of Prof. Kocher's work is limited by the fact that he treats Marlowe mainly as an isolated figure, and explains Marlowe's development entirely in psychological terms. Thus, he declares, in summarizing his discussion, "Marlowe's ideas and emotions have been traced back to ultimate origins in the particular constitution of his psychology." For Prof. Kocher, the more humane attitude of the later Marlowe of *Edward II* is to be explained by the autonomous development of Marlowe's character. No attempt is made to assess the possible influence of changes in Elizabethan life, in the demands of the theatrical audience, in the dramatic tradition as practiced by other writers.

Despite this weakness of approach, Prof. Kocher succeeds in giving us a sensitive analysis of Marlowe's thought and character, which throws new light particularly on two of Marlowe's greatest works, *Tamburlaine* and *Doctor Faustus*.

DAVID HARRIS.

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sights and sounds

ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST

The evil Hubbards—again. A view of Miss Hellman's play which explores the lair of "The Little Foxes."

By ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

LILLIAN HELLMAN's dramatic gifts are natural and considerable. Conflict, that essential of drama, possesses her stage from the first rise of the curtain. For example, in *Another Part of the Forest*, the play opens on one of the major characters in a key situation. And as long as the curtain is up, the action keeps its momentum. There is no pause.

As the plot machinery comes to a stop, however, the headlong characters flatten into monotones. With the curtain down, and the mind, at its own pace, examining what it has received, characters and situations take on different measures. To explain this, however, a synopsis will be necessary.

Marcus Hubbard, founder of the brutal Southern family whose later stage of unprincipled success was given in *The Little Foxes*, is secure so long as the evidence remains undisclosed that he has made his fortune on war contraband and on blood money from the enemy. Once the neighbors on whose disasters he had fattened had come for him with rope and tar; and though feeling has since simmered down from that boiling point, their suspicion remains. The Hubbards can claim the distinction of being the best-hated family in the community.

The Hubbard lack of human feeling has reached within as well as outside the family circle. Each exercises toward the other only the degree of consideration the latter's own power compels. Marcus, as the holder of the Hubbard money, and therefore of the family rule, is freest to indulge the family sadism. He has terrified his wife into imbecility. Ben, his older son, has been harried into vengeful plots. His younger son, Oscar, has grown up stupefied, drooling into a moronic romance with a streetwalker and making moronic assertions of manhood in night-riding with the Klan.

Even the one loving feeling Marcus has is evil. Directed toward his daughter Regina, it has an incestuous stain which the corrupted girl exploits. Through it she gets the effective power of the family wealth into her hands and manages to hold it until Ben discovers the evidence that can hang his father, confronts him with it and forces the transfer of the possessions —and the power—into his own hands.

Thus the three chief characters whose cross-purposes provide the dramatic conflict are not only emotionally one-dimensioned, but their emotion is substantially the same. Marcus and Ben are both ruthless, with the difference that, controlling the power-giving wealth, Marcus has been able to relax, to indulge a vice and even a "weakness," a taste for music that he spoils by his heartlessness toward the hired musicians. Regina is equally ruthless, but her rapacity is given in feminine terms. She works through men, incites their male competitiveness, sets one against the other to triumph in their mutual destruction. Even in love she is murderously possessive, seeking to kill all other emotions and loyalties in her lover though that would become self-frustrating, leaving her an empty skin of a man.

The other characters are monotones of other emotions. The mother is all palpitating bad conscience reduced to the lowest terms of hysterical, self-martyring penance. The younger son Oscar is all moron. The streetwalker, whom he introduces into his family, is not given enough other character to be able to step out of her sluttishness. In the Hubbard drawing-room, even before Ben, taking advantage of it for his own purposes, gets her drunk, she remains the streetwalker, failing of the simplest social adjustment. The humble Birdie Bagtry, coming for a loan on her family property, is all fumbling flutter. Her brother, Regina's lover, is all Confederate quixoticism. Even the old musician is all sycophant.

For plotted dramatic effects such oversimplified characterization is, of course, an advantage. But that advantage has to be paid for. One misses the emotional complex, the inner conflicts that would have made the characters humanly, not inhumanly, real.

THIS oversimplified characterization has two other consequences. One is in the social implication that personal evil is the source of wealth; Marcus and Ben are suggested as the human prototypes of capitalism. Here oversimplified characterization leads to oversimplified history.

Capitalism, all through its history, has certainly involved and inflicted evil. But one of its chief horrors has been the very impersonality of that evil. Personally the creators of capitalism have stood as good men in comparison with the decadent aristocrats whom they were displacing. Their rapacity was rationalized away by the moralists like Herbert Spencer, who contrived an ethics with a new decalogue out of Darwin, for capitalists who were also church elders and pillars of society.

The second consequence has already been suggested—the omission of inward conflict and of the general conflict of good and evil. Miss Hellman's own former treatment of these conflicts made her *Watch On the Rhine* and her *The Searching Wind*, despite structural flaws in the latter, fuller and deeper plays than she has given us here.

The problem of good and evil as a theme for drama is age-old. In *Another Part of the Forest* it is only suggested in the characterization of the mother, where the conflict has destroyed the mind, but it is left untouched in the decisive characters.

These characters have no struggle except among themselves. Within

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themselves the evil Hubbards continue carefree in their evil.

It is hard to conceive characters who so consciously invite repulsion and enmity as these three strong Hubbards. It is a psychological truism that people wither or bloom according to the acceptance of people around them. Thieves consort with thieves and misery loves company to assure a compatible psychological atmosphere. There have been some peculiar saints, according to reports, who have shown such indifference to their fellow men. But they, at least, were presumed to be in amiable communion with spirits.

This said, it is necessary to repeat that *Another Part of the Forest* has great dramatic drive and through the first two acts it is convincing; the third act is too trickily balanced on plot pivots for similar conviction. Again, in this play, Miss Hellman brings responsible and progressive social commentary to the stage, despite the oversimplified identification of capitalism with personal evil. And she reveals a new aspect of her dramatic understanding in her effective direction. The acting, particularly by Percy Waram as Marcus, Mildred Dunnock as the mother, Patricia Neal as Regina, Leo Genn and Scott McKay as the brothers, Margaret Phillips as Birdie and Beatrice Thompson as Coralee, is superb.

MUSIC

THE New York City Center orchestra, led by Leonard Bernstein, closed its short and brilliant season with a performance of Igor Stravinsky's oratorio, "Oedipus Rex," a work important both for its strengths and weaknesses in the confused history of music in our century.

Stravinsky lost his estates in the Russian revolution of 1917. Living in Paris at the time, he resolved never to return to his homeland. The Russian people managed to survive the loss, but the harm to Stravinsky as an artist was deeper and less easily remedied. Along with his homeland, he renounced his national idiom, which he had used with such imaginative and expressive effect in "The Fire Bird," "Petrouchka" and "The Rites of Spring." He was never able to find another idiom equally emotional and germinating to replace it. It would be wrong to say that his neo-classic style, which followed, was wholly due to his denationalization, or that it was wholly a degeneration. Elements of this style may be found in his earlier works, and he continued to make great advances in the handling of musical materials. These advances became, however, increasingly one-sided, betraying a fatal lack of interest in human beings as a part of the communication of music.

"Oedipus Rex" is his most imposing neo-classic work, displaying all of the characteristics of this style. The story is taken from the ancient Greek. The libretto, written by Jean Cocteau, is translated into Latin, so that neither composer, singers nor audience would be bothered with the meaning of words, but only with their sound. Each section is a tight, self-contained design, such as a fugue, or an aria or duet in the Handel style. The orchestra plays independently against the vocal lines, instead of serving as background. The most original and exciting aspect of the work is its handling of instrumental sound.

Stravinsky's instrumentation is not the sensuous color combination of the romanticist orchestra. The texture is cut down to fundamentals. No instrument is subservient to another. Each plays its own lordly and powerful role, alone and in combination. Nor is this merely an emphasis upon one isolated aspect of music, for the instrumentation inspires, clarifies and dominates the harmony and rhythm. The results were at many times intensely exciting and beautiful. There has been little music ever written in which every nuance of a composer's thought is displayed so effectively.

But the melodic line is from hunger. Arbitrary note patterns, with no shred of emotional character, serve as themes for the choruses. Other melodic lines are imitations of Handel, and even of Donizetti and Meyerbeer. There is an attempt sometimes to pictorialize emotions, like a chromatic descending line to depict anguish, or staccato ejaculations for terror and excitement. Such recourses are pitiful in their inadequacy. The commentary, here spoken by Norman Corwin, gives, in spite of Cocteau's shallow modernization of the Sophocles drama, far more than anything in Stravinsky's music the presence of human beings and their emotional problems.

This is not music that wears well;

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it will never be cherished by audiences as today works of Beethoven, Brahms and Tschaikowsky are cherished. It will stand for a long time as an exciting experience in the concert hall, and as a mine of useful knowledge to musical craftsmen. It is ironic that this music is worshipped as it is by American musicians. Although it was written in Paris in the Twenties, and upheld then as an apex of modernism, Europe has assimilated it and gone beyond. A new spirit is alive in French, British, Soviet and middle-European music.

In the United States, however, a clique of composers and critics have taken Stravinsky to their hearts, writing of his music as if it were the modern Bible, and pouring contempt upon composers and audiences who want music to be more human and epic. They uphold Stravinsky's abstraction as the musical "revolution," and sneer at all more humanly realistic composers as vulgar and "bourgeois." By perverting and idolizing the genuine scientific achievements of neo-classicism into a philosophy of inhumanity, they destroy the effects of their own often valuable analyses, and do little good to American music.

The shortness of the New York City Center music season deserves comment. The orchestra, under Leonard Bernstein, and the opera, under Lazlo Halasz, have displayed what a music season should be: a series of programs that show respect for their audiences, that without over-preciousness open up new horizons, that give young composers and performers a hearing, and break down Jim Crow lines. Yet this season is ending just as the New York music season is past its opening. Can it be that the millionaires who run the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and the Metropolitan Opera resent this competition, and have used their influence upon the city government to this end?

There is room in New York City for two orchestras and two opera companies, and the people of the city should put up a fight for their orchestra and opera, which comes closer to their needs and pocketbooks.

S. FINKELSTEIN.

Opera Records

OPERA, of all large-scale musical forms, has the deepest roots among the common people. It grew largely out of medieval folk plays with songs. It played a living role in the revival of national consciousness and the struggle for national freedom in the last century. It remains today the musical form capable of the broadest appeal and most explicit communication.

In the Soviet Union and Italy, it has some of the characteristics of a great popular art form, approached with the same excitement as spoken drama, serving as a training ground for composers and an education in the power of music to audiences. In our own country, however, this form is still treated as a musical luxury, a springboard for the display of vocal personalities. Only the Germans—Wagner and his over-inflated disciple, Richard Strauss—are treated with respect as musicians. Verdi, a far greater realist than either, who put a host of varied human characters and social problems on the operatic stage, with a supreme lyrical genius and fine subtlety in construction, is still treated as an avenue of musical slumming.

Typical of such treatment is the batch of operatic records Victor is issuing, consisting of two albums and six single discs. Wagner alone rates a serious musical treatment, with a scene presented in its entirety. In the selections from all the non-Wagnerian operas, the solo aria is emphasized, although that is far from the best music in the operas involved. Not only do these ten-times familiar arias suffer from being out of context, but recitatives are ignored or cut, although they are often of as great musical importance as the arias. As a final injury, the aria itself is often cut to fit it on one record side.

Such a treatment, despising the music, affects likewise the singing. The performers try to be Voices. Peerce, Warren, Thebom sing with a consistent loudness, as if to sing softly were a confession of weakness. They thus endanger the life of their vocal organs, and furthermore rob their performances of the varied color which is a central element in fine singing. They try to phrase intelligently, but apply a standardized phrasing rather than molding their vocal style out of the unique human and emotional problem of each selection.

In the "Treasury of Grand Opera" album (Victor 1074) the most acceptable vocal side is the duet "*Un di felice*" from *La Traviata*, with Albanese and Peerce. Milanov sings "*Ri-*

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torna Vincitor" from *Aida* superbly, but the aria is butchered to fit the record. Warren sings a similarly butchered version of the *Pagliacci* Prologue. Melton does a fair job with the difficulties of Mozart's *"Il mio tesoro."* Swarthout has an inadequate voice for the *Carmen* "Habanera." Toscanini presents his already familiar performance of the *Lohengrin* prelude.

Among the singles, Milanov does a thrilling vocal and dramatic job with *"Suicidio"* from *La Gioconda,* but her *"Casta Diva,"* on the other side, is cut (V-11-9293). Merrill handles his baritone voice very tastefully in arias from Thomas' *Hamlet* and Massanet's *Herodiade* (V-11-9291). Warren's performances of arias from *Otello* and *Ballo in Maschera* are loud and colorless (V-11-9292), as are Peerce's performances of arias from *Africana* and *Ballo in Maschera* (V-11-9295). The Shaw chorus does the Anvil Chorus from *Il Trovatore* and the Bridal Chorus from *Lohengrin* very well (V-11-9294). Only Wagner rates two sides for one selection. It is Waltraute's narrative from *Gotterdammerung,* given a performance by Thebom which is sometimes exciting and sometimes shaky (V-11-9296). On the whole, people who are interested in opera are not getting any idea of the greatness of operatic music from such records as these, pleasant as they are. It is not necessary to record every note of an opera, but at least the smaller musical patterns can be preserved intact. I would suggest that to solve the small excerpt problem, the record companies reissue a healthy batch of the old Battistini, Caruso, Destinn, Melba, Boninsegna, Plancon, Sammarco and De Lucia records in their files, to show the present generation what singing can be like; then, that they use the present crop of singers and modern recording facilities to record more substantial selections than we now have from the non-Wagnerian operatic repertory.

The album of "Russian Operatic Arias" (Victor M 1073), sung by Kipnis, is likewise made up of isolated excerpts. The music includes the beautiful air of Prince Gremin from Tschaikowsky's *Eugene Onegin,* two Moussorgsky excerpts not found in the fine *Boris Godunov* album, and selections from Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin and Dargomijsky. The music is less hackneyed, however, than the Italian selections above, and Kipnis sings like a fine artist.

S. F.

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First Issue: January, 1947

Single copy 50¢; Subscription $2

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